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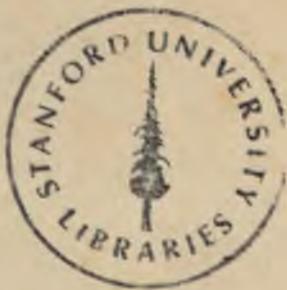
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‘THE KINGDOM OF GOD
IS WITHIN YOU’





Tolstoi, L. N.
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'THE KINGDOM OF GOD
IS WITHIN YOU'

CHRISTIANITY NOT AS A MYSTIC
RELIGION BUT AS A NEW
THEORY OF LIFE

TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN OF

COUNT LEO TOLSTOY

BY

CONSTANCE GARNETT

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I.

LONDON
WILLIAM HEINEMANN
1894

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

*This version of Count Tolstoy's work has
been made directly from Russian advance
sheets sold to me by the publishers of the
Russian original.*

WM. HEINEMANN.



TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

THE book I have had the privilege of translating is, undoubtedly, one of the most remarkable studies, of the social and psychological condition of the modern world, which has appeared in Europe for many years, and its influence is sure to be lasting and far-reaching. Tolstoy's genius is beyond dispute. The verdict of the civilised world has pronounced him as perhaps the greatest novelist of our generation. But the philosophical and religious works of his later years have met with a somewhat indifferent reception. They have been much talked about, simply because they were his work, but, as Tolstoy himself complains, they have never been seriously discussed. I hardly think that he will have to repeat the complaint in regard to the present volume. One may disagree with his

views, but no one can seriously deny the originality, boldness and depth of the social conception which he develops with such powerful logic. The novelist has shown in this book the religious fervour and spiritual insight of the prophet; yet one is pleased to recognise that the artist is not wholly lost in the thinker. The subtle intuitive perception of the psychological basis of the social position; the analysis of the frame of mind of oppressors and oppressed, and of "the intoxication of Authority and Servility"; the purely descriptive passages in the last chapter, these could only have come from the author of "War and Peace."

The book will surely give all classes of readers much to think of, and must call forth much criticism. It must be refuted by those who disapprove of its teaching, if they do not want it to have great influence.

One cannot of course anticipate that English people, slow as they are to be influenced by ideas, and instinctively distrustful of all that is logical, will take a leap in the dark and attempt to put Tolstoy's theory of life into practice. But one may at least be sure that

his destructive criticism of the present social and political *régime* will become a powerful force in the work of disintegration and social reconstruction which is going on around us. Many earnest thinkers who, like Tolstoy, are struggling to find their way out of the contradictions of our social order will hail him as their spiritual guide. The individuality of the author is felt in every line of his work, and even the most prejudiced cannot resist the fascination of his genuineness, sincerity, and profound earnestness. Whatever comes from a heart such as his, swelling with anger and pity at the sufferings of humanity, cannot fail to reach the hearts of others. No reader can put down the book without feeling himself better and more truthtaking for having read it.

Many readers may be disappointed with the opening chapters of the book. Tolstoy despairs all attempt to captivate the reader. He begins by laying what he considers to be the logical foundation of his doctrines, stringing together quotations from little-known theological writers, and he keeps his own incisive logic for the latter part of the book.

One word as to the translation. Tolstoy's style in his religious and philosophical works differs considerably from that of his novels. He no longer cares about the form of his work, and his style is often slipshod, involved, and diffuse. It has been my aim to give a faithful reproduction of the original.

CONSTANCE GARNETT.

January 1894.

PREFACE

In the year 1884 I wrote a book under the title, "What I believe," in which I did in fact make a sincere statement of my beliefs.

In affirming my belief in Christ's teaching, I could not help explaining why I do not believe, and consider as mistaken, the Church's doctrine, which is usually called Christianity.

Among the many points in which this doctrine falls short of the doctrine of Christ I pointed out as the principal one—the absence of any commandment of non-resistance to evil by force. The perversion of Christ's teaching by the teaching of the Church is more clearly apparent in this than in any other point of difference.

I know—as we all do—very little of the practice and the spoken and written doctrine

of former times on the subject of non-resistance to evil. I knew what had been said on the subject by the fathers of the Church—Origen, Tertullian, and others—I knew too of the existence of some so-called sects of Menonites, Herrnhuters, and Quakers, who do not allow a Christian the use of weapons, and do not enter military service; but I knew little of what had been done by these so-called sects towards expounding the question.

My book was, as I had anticipated, suppressed by the Russian Censorship; but partly owing to my literary reputation, partly because the book had excited people's curiosity, it circulated in manuscript and in lithographed copies in Russia and through translations abroad, and it evoked, on one side, from those who shared my convictions, a series of essays with a great deal of information on the subject, on the other side a series of criticisms on the principles laid down in my book.

A great deal was made clear to me by both hostile and sympathetic criticism, and also by the historical events of the

last years; and I was led to fresh results and conclusions, which I wish now to expound.

First I will speak of the information I received on the history of the question of non-resistance to evil; then of the views of this question maintained by spiritual critics, that is by professed believers in the Christian religion, and also by temporal ones, that is those who do not profess the Christian religion; and lastly I will speak of the conclusions to which I have been brought by all this in the light of the historical events of late years.

L. TOLSTOY.

YASNAIA POLIANA,

May 14-26, 1893.



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"Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
JOHN viii. 32.

"Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."—MATT. x. 28.

"Ye have been bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men."—1 COR. viii. 23.

“THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU”

CHAPTER I

*THE DOCTRINE OF NON-RESISTANCE TO EVIL BY
FORCE HAS BEEN PROFESSED BY A MINORITY
OF MEN FROM THE VERY FOUNDATION OF
CHRISTIANITY.*

Of the book: “What I Believe”—The correspondence evoked by it—Letters from Quakers—Garrison’s declaration—Adin Ballou, his works, his Catechism—Helchitsky’s “Net of Faith”—The attitude of the world to works elucidating Christ’s teaching—Dymond’s book “On War”—Musser’s “Non-Resistance Asserted”—Attitude of the Government in 1818 to men who refused to serve in the army—Hostile attitude of Governments generally and of Liberals to those who refuse to assist in acts of State-violence, and their conscious efforts to silence and suppress these manifestations of Christian non-resistance.

AMONG the first responses called forth by my book were some letters from American Quakers. In these letters, expressing their sympathy with my views on the unlawfulness for a Christian of war and the use of force of any kind, the Quakers gave me details of their own so-called sect, which for more

than 200 years has actually professed the teaching of Christ on non-resistance to evil by force, and does not make use of weapons in self-defence. The Quakers sent me also their pamphlets, journals and books, from which I learnt how they had, years ago, established beyond doubt the duty for a Christian of fulfilling the command of non-resistance to evil by force, and had exposed the error of the Church's teaching in allowing war and capital punishment.

In a whole series of arguments and texts showing that war—that is, the wounding and killing of men—is inconsistent with a religion founded on peace and good-will towards men, the Quakers maintain and prove that nothing has contributed so much to the obscuring of Christian truth in the eyes of the heathen, and has hindered so much the diffusion of Christianity through the world, as the disregard of this command by men calling themselves Christians, and the permission of war and violence to Christians.

“Christ's teaching, which came to be known to men, not by means of violence and the sword,” they say, “but by means of non-resistance to evil, gentleness, meekness, and peaceableness, can only be diffused through the world by the example of peace, harmony, and love among its followers.”

“A Christian, according to the teaching of God Himself, can act only peaceably towards

all men, and therefore there can be no authority able to force the Christian to act in opposition to the teaching of God and to the principal virtue of the Christian in his relation with his neighbours."

"The law of State necessity," they say, "can force only those to change the law of God who, for the sake of earthly gains, try to reconcile the irreconcilable; but for a Christian who sincerely believes that following Christ's teaching will give him salvation, such considerations of State can have no force."

Further acquaintance with the labours of the Quakers and their works—with Fox, Penn, and especially the work of Dymond (published in 1827)—showed me not only that the impossibility of reconciling Christianity with force and war had been recognised long, long ago, but that this irreconcilability had been long ago proved so clearly and so indubitably that one could only wonder how this impossible reconciliation of Christian teaching with the use of force, which has been, and is still, preached in the churches, could have been maintained in spite of it.

In addition to what I learned from the Quakers I received about the same time, also from America, some information on the subject from a source perfectly distinct and previously unknown to me.

The son of William Lloyd Garrison, the

famous champion of the emancipation of the negroes, wrote to me that he had read my book, in which he found ideas similar to those expressed by his father in the year 1838, and that, thinking it would be interesting to me to know this, he sent me a declaration or proclamation of "non-resistance" drawn up by his father nearly fifty years ago.

This declaration came about under the following circumstances. William Lloyd Garrison took part in a discussion on the means of suppressing war in the Society for the Establishment of Peace among Men, which existed in 1838 in America. He came to the conclusion that the establishment of universal peace can only be founded on the open profession of the doctrine of non-resistance to evil by violence (Matt. v. 39), in its full significance, as understood by the Quakers, with whom Garrison happened to be on friendly relations. Having come to this conclusion, Garrison thereupon composed and laid before the Society a declaration, which was signed at the time—in 1838—by many members.

"DECLARATION OF SENTIMENTS ADOPTED
BY THE PEACE CONVENTION.

"BOSTON, 1838.

"We, the undersigned, regard it as due to ourselves, to the cause which we love, to

the country in which we live, to publish a declaration expressive of the purposes we aim to accomplish and the measures we shall adopt to carry forward the work of peaceful universal reformation.

"We do not acknowledge allegiance to any human government. We recognise but one King and Lawgiver, one Judge and Ruler of mankind. Our country is the world, our countrymen are all mankind. We love the land of our nativity only as we love all other lands. The interests and rights of American citizens are not dearer to us than those of the whole human race. Hence we can allow no appeal to patriotism to revenge any national insult or injury. . . .

"We conceive that a nation has no right to defend itself against foreign enemies or to punish its invaders, and no individual possesses that right in his own case, and the unit cannot be of greater importance than the aggregate. If soldiers thronging from abroad with intent to commit rapine and destroy life may not be resisted by the people or the magistracy, then ought no resistance to be offered to domestic troublers of the public peace or of private security.

"The dogma that all the governments of the world are approvingly ordained of God, and that the powers that be in the United States, in Russia, in Turkey, are in accordance with His will, is no less absurd than

impious. It makes the impartial Author of our existence unequal and tyrannical. It cannot be affirmed that the powers that be in any nation are actuated by the spirit or guided by the example of Christ in the treatment of enemies; therefore they cannot be agreeable to the will of God, and therefore their overthrow by a spiritual regeneration of their subjects is inevitable.

“We regard as unchristian and unlawful not only all wars, whether offensive or defensive, but all preparations for war; every naval ship, every arsenal, every fortification we regard as unchristian and unlawful; the existence of any kind of standing army, all military chieftains, all monuments commemorative of victory over a fallen foe, all trophies won in battle, all celebrations in honour of military exploits, all appropriations for defence by arms; we regard as unchristian and unlawful every edict of government requiring of its subjects military service.

“Hence we deem it unlawful to bear arms, and we cannot hold any office which imposes on its incumbent the obligation to compel men to do right on pain of imprisonment or death. We therefore voluntarily exclude ourselves from every legislative and judicial body, and repudiate all human politics, worldly honours, and stations of authority. If we cannot occupy a seat in the legislature, or on the bench, neither can we elect others

to act as our substitutes in any such capacity. It follows that we cannot sue any man at law to force him to return anything he may have wrongfully taken from us ; if he has seized our coat, we shall surrender him our cloak also rather than subject him to punishment.

" We believe that the penal code of the old covenant—an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth—has been abrogated by Jesus Christ, and that under the new covenant the forgiveness instead of the punishment of enemies has been enjoined on all His disciples in all cases whatsoever. To extort money from enemies, cast them into prison, exile or execute them, is obviously not to forgive but to take retribution.

" The history of mankind is crowded with evidences proving that physical coercion is not adapted to moral regeneration, and that the sinful dispositions of men can be subdued only by love, that evil can be exterminated only by good, that it is not safe to rely upon the strength of an arm to preserve us from harm, that there is great security in being gentle, long-suffering, and abundant in mercy ; that it is only the meek who shall inherit the earth ; for those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword.

" Hence as a measure of sound policy—of safety to property, life, and liberty—of public quietude and private enjoyment—as well as on the ground of allegiance to Him

who is King of kings and Lord of lords, we cordially adopt the non-resistance principle, being confident that it provides for all possible consequences, is armed with omnipotent power, and must ultimately triumph over every assailing force.

"We advocate no Jacobinical doctrines. The spirit of Jacobinism is the spirit of retaliation, violence, and murder. It neither fears God nor regards man. We would be filled with the spirit of Christ. If we abide by our fundamental principle of not opposing evil by evil, we cannot participate in sedition, treason, or violence. We shall submit to every ordinance and every requirement of government, except such as are contrary to the commands of the gospel, and in no case resist the operation of law, except by meekly submitting to the penalty of disobedience.

"But while we shall adhere to the doctrine of non-resistance and passive submission to enemies, we purpose, in a moral and spiritual sense, to assail iniquity in high places and in low places, to apply our principles to all existing evil, political, legal, and ecclesiastical institutions, and to hasten the time when the kingdoms of this world will have become the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. It appears to us a self-evident truth that whatever the gospel is designed to destroy at any period of the world, being contrary to it, ought now to be abandoned. If, then, the

time is predicted when swords shall be beaten into ploughshares and spears into pruning-hooks, and men shall not learn the art of war any more, it follows that all who manufacture, sell, or wield these deadly weapons do thus array themselves against the peaceful dominion of the Son of God on earth.

" Having thus stated our principles, we proceed to specify the measures we propose to adopt in carrying our object into effect.

" We expect to prevail through the Foolishness of Preaching. We shall endeavour to promulgate our views among all persons, to whatever nation, sect, or grade of society they may belong. Hence we shall organise public lectures, circulate tracts and publications, form societies, and petition every governing body. It will be our leading object to devise ways and means for effecting a radical change in the views, feelings, and practices of society respecting the sinfulness of war and the treatment of enemies.

" In entering upon the great work before us, we are not unmindful that in its prosecution we may be called to test our sincerity even as in a fiery ordeal. It may subject us to insult, outrage, suffering, yea, even death itself. We anticipate no small amount of misconception, misrepresentation, and calumny. Tumults may arise against us. The proud and pharisaical, the ambitious

and tyrannical, principalities and powers, may combine to crush us. So they treated the Messiah whose example we are humbly striving to imitate. We shall not be afraid of their terror. Our confidence is in the Lord Almighty and not in man. Having withdrawn from human protection, what can sustain us but that faith which overcomes the world? We shall not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try us, but rejoice inasmuch as we are partakers of Christ's sufferings.

"Wherefore we commit the keeping of our souls to God. For every one that forsakes houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for Christ's sake, shall receive a hundred-fold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

"Firmly relying upon the certain and universal triumph of the sentiments contained in this declaration, however formidable may be the opposition arrayed against them, we hereby affix our signatures to it; commanding it to the reason and conscience of mankind, and resolving, in the strength of the Lord God, to calmly and meekly abide the issue."

Immediately after this declaration a Society for Non-resistance was founded by Garrison, and a journal, called the *Non-resistant*, in which the doctrine of non-resistance was

advocated in its full significance and in all its consequences, as it had been expounded in the declaration. Further information as to the ultimate destiny of the society and the journal I gained from the excellent biography of W. L. Garrison, the work of his son.

The society and the journal did not exist for long. The greater number of Garrison's fellow-workers in the movement for the liberation of the slaves, fearing that the too radical programme of the journal, the *Non-resistant*, might keep people away from the practical work of negro-emancipation, gave up the profession of the principle of non-resistance as it had been expressed in the declaration, and both society and journal ceased to exist.

This declaration of Garrison's gave so powerful and eloquent an expression of a confession of faith of such importance to men, that one would have thought it must have produced a strong impression on people, and have become known throughout the world and the subject of discussion on every side. But nothing of the kind occurred. Not only was it unknown in Europe, even the Americans, who have such a high opinion of Garrison, hardly knew of the declaration.

Another champion of non-resistance has been overlooked in the same way—the American, Adin Ballou, who lately died, after spending fifty years in preaching this

doctrine. How great the ignorance is of everything relating to the question of non-resistance may be seen from the fact that Garrison the son, who has written an excellent biography of his father in four great volumes, in answer to my inquiry whether there are existing now societies for non-resistance, and adherents of the doctrine, told me, that as far as he knew that society had broken up, and that there were no adherents of that doctrine, while at the very time when he was writing to me there was living at Hopedale, in Massachusetts, Adin Ballou, who had taken part in the labours of Garrison the father, and had devoted fifty years of his life to advocating, both orally and in print, the doctrine of non-resistance. Later on I received a letter from Wilson, a pupil and colleague of Ballou's, and entered into correspondence with Ballou himself. I wrote to Ballou, and he answered me and sent me his works. Here is the summary of some extracts from them :

"Jesus Christ is my Lord and teacher," says Ballou, in one of his essays exposing the inconsistency of Christians who allowed a right of self-defence and of warfare. "I have promised, leaving all else, to follow Him, through good and through evil, to death itself. But I am a citizen of the democratic republic of the United States; and in allegiance to it I have sworn to defend the

Constitution of my country, if need be, with my life. Christ requires of me to do unto others as I would they should do unto me. The Constitution of the United States requires of me to do unto two millions of slaves (at that time there were slaves ; now one might venture to substitute the word 'labourers') the very opposite of what I would they should do unto me—that is, to help to keep them in their present condition of slavery. And, in spite of this, I continue to elect or be elected, I propose to vote, I am even ready to be appointed to any office under Government. That will not hinder me from being a Christian. I shall still profess Christianity, and shall find no difficulty in carrying out my covenant with Christ and with the Government.

"Jesus Christ forbids me to resist evildoers, and to take from them an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, bloodshed for bloodshed, and life for life.

"My Government demands from me quite the opposite, and bases a system of self-defence on gallows, musket, and sword, to be used against its foreign and domestic foes. And the land is filled accordingly with gibbets, prisons, arsenals, ships of war, and soldiers.

"In the maintenance and use of these expensive appliances for murder, we can very suitably exercise to the full the virtues of

forgiveness to those who injure us, love towards our enemies, blessings to those who curse us, and doing good to those who hate us.

" For this we have a succession of Christian priests to pray for us and beseech the blessing of Heaven on the holy work of slaughter.

" I see all this (*i.e.*, the contradiction between profession and practice), and I continue to profess religion and take part in government, and pride myself on being at the same time a devout Christian and a devoted servant of the government. I do not want to agree with these senseless notions of non-resistance. I cannot renounce my authority and leave only immoral men in control of the government. The Constitution says : the government has the right to declare war, and I assent to this and support it, and swear that I will support it. And I do not for that cease to be a Christian. War, too, is a Christian duty. Is it not a Christian duty to kill hundreds of thousands of one's fellow-men, to outrage women, to raze and burn towns, and to practise every possible cruelty? It is time to dismiss all these false sentimentalities. It is the truest means of forgiving injuries and loving enemies. If we only do it in the spirit of love, nothing can be more Christian than such murder."

In another pamphlet, entitled " How many

Men are necessary to Change a Crime into a Virtue?" he says: "One man may not kill. If he kills a fellow-creature, he is a murderer. If two, ten, a hundred men do so, they, too, are murderers. But a Government or a nation may kill as many men as it chooses, and that will not be murder, but a great and noble action. Only gather the people together on a large scale, and a battle of ten thousand men becomes an innocent action. But precisely how many people must there be to make it so?—that is the question. One man cannot plunder and pillage, but a whole nation can. But precisely how many are needed to make it permissible? Why is it that one man, ten, a hundred, may not break the law of God, but a great number may?"

And here is a version of Ballou's Catechism composed for his flock:

CATECHISM OF NON-RESISTANCE.

Q. Whence is the word "non-resistance" derived?

A. From the command, "Resist not evil" (M. v. 39).

Q. What does this word express?

A. It expresses a lofty Christian virtue enjoined on us by Christ.

Q. Ought the word "non-resistance" to be taken in its widest sense—that is to say,

as intending that we should not offer any resistance of any kind to evil?

A. No; it ought to be taken in the exact sense of our Saviour's teaching—that is, not repaying evil for evil. We ought to oppose evil by every righteous means in our power, but not by evil.

Q. What is there to show that Christ enjoined non-resistance in that sense?

A. It is shown by the words he uttered at the same time. He said: "Ye have heard, it was said of old, An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you, Resist not evil. But if one smites thee on the right cheek, turn him the other also; and if one will go to law with thee to take thy coat from thee, give him thy cloak also."

Q. Of whom was He speaking in the words, "Ye have heard it was said of old"?

A. Of the patriarchs and the prophets, contained in the Old Testament, which the Hebrews ordinarily call the Law and the Prophets.

Q. What utterances did Christ refer to in the words, "it was said of old"?

A. The utterances of Noah, Moses, and the other prophets, in which they admit the right of doing bodily harm to those who inflict harm, so as to punish and prevent evil deeds.

Q. Quote such utterances.

A. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed."—GEN. ix. 6.

"He that smiteth a man so that he die shall be surely put to death. And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe."—Ex. xxi. 12 and 25.

"He that killeth any man shall surely be put to death. And if a man cause a blemish in his neighbour, as he hath done, so shall it be done to him: breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth."—LEV. xxiv. 17, 19, 20.

"Then the judges shall make diligent inquisition, and behold if the witness be a false witness, and has testified falsely against his brother, then shall ye do unto him as he had thought to have done unto his brother. . . . And thine eye shall not pity; but life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot."—DEUT. xix. 18, 21.

Noah, Moses, and the Prophets taught that he who kills, maims, or injures his neighbours does evil. To resist such evil, and to prevent it, the evil-doer must be punished with death, or maiming, or some physical injury. Wrong must be opposed by wrong, murder by murder, injury by injury, evil by evil. Thus taught Noah, Moses, and the

Prophets. But Christ rejects all this. "I say unto you," is written in the Gospel, "resist not evil," do not oppose injury with injury, but rather bear repeated injury from the evildoer. What was permitted is forbidden. When we understand what kind of resistance they taught, we know exactly what resistance Christ forbade.

Q. Then the ancients allowed the resistance of injury by injury?

A. Yes. But Jesus forbids it. The Christian has in no case the right to put to death his neighbour who has done him evil, or to do him injury in return.

Q. May he kill or maim him in self-defence?

A. No.

Q. May he go with a complaint to the judge that he who has wronged him may be punished?

A. No. What he does through others, he is in reality doing himself.

Q. Can he fight in conflict with foreign enemies or disturbers of the peace?

A. Certainly not. He cannot take any part in war or in preparations for war. He cannot make use of a deadly weapon. He cannot oppose injury to injury, whether he is alone or with others, either in person or through other people.

Q. Can he voluntarily vote or furnish soldiers for the Government?

A. He can do nothing of that kind if he wishes to be faithful to Christ's law.

Q. Can he voluntarily give money to aid a government resting on military force, capital punishment, and violence in general?

A. No; unless the money is destined for some special object, right in itself, and good both in aim and means.

Q. Can he pay taxes to such a government?

A. No; he ought not voluntarily to pay taxes, but he ought not to resist the collecting of taxes. A tax is levied by the government, and is exacted independently of the will of the subject. It is impossible to resist it without having recourse to violence of some kind. Since the Christian cannot employ violence, he is obliged to offer his property at once to the loss by violence inflicted on it by the authorities.

Q. Can a Christian give a vote at elections, or take part in government or law business?

A. No; participation in election, government, or law business is participation in government by force.

Q. Wherein lies the chief significance of the doctrine of non-resistance?

A. In the fact that it alone allows of the possibility of eradicating evil from one's own heart, and also from one's neighbour's. This doctrine forbids doing that whereby evil has endured for ages and multiplied in the world.

He who attacks another and injures him, kindles in the other a feeling of hatred, the root of every evil. To injure another because he has injured us, even with the aim of overcoming evil, is doubling the harm for him and for oneself; it is begetting, or at least setting free and inciting, that evil spirit which we should wish to drive out. Satan can never be driven out by Satan. Error can never be corrected by error, and evil cannot be vanquished by evil.

True non-resistance is the only real resistance to evil. It is crushing the serpent's head. It destroys and in the end extirpates the evil feeling.

Q. But if that is the true meaning of the rule of non-resistance, can it always be put into practice?

A. It can be put into practice like every virtue enjoined by the law of God. A virtue cannot be practised in all circumstances without self-sacrifice, privation, suffering, and in extreme cases loss of life itself. But he who esteems life more than fulfilling the will of God is already dead to the only true life. Trying to save his life he loses it. Besides, generally speaking, where non-resistance costs the sacrifice of a single life or of some material welfare, resistance costs a thousand such sacrifices.

Non-resistance is Salvation; Resistance is Ruin.

It is incomparably less dangerous to act justly than unjustly, to submit to injuries than to resist them with violence, less dangerous even in one's relations to the present life. If all men refused to resist evil by evil our world would be happy.

Q. But so long as only a few act thus, what will happen to them?

A. If only one man acted thus, and all the rest agreed to crucify him, would it not be nobler for him to die in the glory of non-resisting love, praying for his enemies, than to live to wear the crown of Cæsar stained with the blood of the slain? However, one man, or a thousand men, firmly resolved not to oppose evil by evil, are far more free from danger by violence than those who resort to violence, whether among civilised or savage neighbours. The robber, the murderer, and the cheat will leave them in peace, sooner than those who oppose them with arms, and those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword, but those who seek after peace, and behave kindly and harmlessly, forgiving and forgetting injuries, for the most part enjoy peace, or, if they die, they die blessed. In this way, if all kept the ordinance of non-resistance, there would obviously be no evil nor crime. If the majority acted thus they would establish the rule of love and goodwill even over evildoers, never opposing evil with evil, and never resorting to force. If there

were a moderately large minority of such men, they would exercise such a salutary moral influence on society that every cruel punishment would be abolished, and violence and feud would be replaced by peace and love. Even if there were only a small minority of them, they would rarely experience anything worse than the world's contempt, and meantime the world, though unconscious of it, and not grateful for it, would be continually becoming wiser and better for their unseen action on it. And if in the worst case some members of the minority were persecuted to death, in dying for the truth they would have left behind them their doctrine, sanctified by the blood of their martyrdom. Peace, then, to all who seek peace, and may over-ruling love be the imperishable heritage of every soul who obeys willingly Christ's word, "Resist not evil."

ADIN BALLOU.

For fifty years Ballou wrote and published books dealing principally with the question of non-resistance to evil by force. In these works, which are distinguished by the clearness of their thought and eloquence of exposition, the question is looked at from every possible side, and the binding nature of this command on every Christian who acknowledges the Bible as the revelation of

God is firmly established. All the ordinary objections to the doctrine of non-resistance from the Old and New Testaments are brought forward, such as the expulsion of the money-changers from the Temple and so on, and arguments follow in disproof of them all. The practical reasonableness of this rule of conduct is shown independently of Scripture, and all the objections ordinarily made against its practicability are stated and refuted. Thus one chapter in a book of his treats of non-resistance in exceptional cases, and he owns in this connection that if there were cases in which the rule of non-resistance were impossible of application, it would prove that the law was not universally authoritative. Quoting these cases, he shows that it is precisely in them that the application of the rule is both necessary and reasonable. There is no aspect of the question, either on his side or on his opponents', which he has not followed up in his writings. I mention all this to show the unmistakable interest which such works ought to have for men who make a profession of Christianity, and because one would have thought Ballou's work would have been well known, and the ideas expressed by him would have been either accepted or refuted; but such has not been the case.

The work of Garrison, the father, in his foundation of the Society of Non-resistants

and his declaration, even more than my correspondence with the Quakers, convinced me of the fact that the departure of the ruling form of Christianity from the law of Christ on non-resistance by force, is an error that has long been observed and pointed out, and that men have laboured, and are still labouring, to correct. Ballou's work confirmed me still more in this view. But the fate of Garrison, still more that of Ballou, in being completely unrecognised in spite of fifty years of obstinate and persistent work in the same direction, confirmed me in the idea that there exists a kind of tacit but steadfast, conspiracy of silence about all such efforts.

Ballou died in August 1890, and there was an obituary notice of him in an American journal of Christian views (*Religious-Philosophical Journal*, August 23). In this laudatory notice it is recorded that Ballou was the spiritual director of a parish, that he delivered from eight to nine thousand sermons, married 1000 couples, and wrote about 500 articles; but there is not a single word said of the object to which he devoted his life, even the word "non-resistance" is not mentioned. Precisely as it was with all the preaching of the Quakers for 200 years, and, too, with the efforts of Garrison the father, the foundation of his Society and journal, and his declaration, so it is with the

life-work of Ballou. It seems just as though it did not exist and never had existed.

We have an astounding example of the obscurity of works which aim at expounding the doctrine of non-resistance to evil by force, and at confuting those who do not recognise this commandment, in the book of the Tsech Helchitsky, which has only lately been noticed and has not hitherto been printed.

Soon after the appearance of my book in German, I received a letter from Prague, from a professor of the university there, informing me of the existence of a work never yet printed, by Helchitsky, a Tsech of the fifteenth century, entitled "The Net of Faith." In this work the professor told me Helchitsky expressed precisely the same view as to true and false Christianity as I had expressed in my book, "What I Believe." The professor wrote to me that Helchitsky's work was to be published for the first time in the Tsech language in the journal "The Petersburg Academy of Science." Since I could not obtain the book itself, I tried to make myself acquainted with what was known of Helchitsky, and I gained the following information from a German book sent me by the Prague professor and from Pypin's history of Tsech literature. This was Pypin's account:

"'The Net of Faith' is Christ's teaching,

which ought to draw man up out of the dark depths of the sea of worldliness and his own iniquity. True faith consists in believing God's Word; but now a time has come when men mistake the true faith for heresy, and therefore it is for the reason to point out what the true faith consists in, if any one does not know this. It is hidden in darkness from men, and they do not recognise the true law of Christ.

"To make this law plain, Helchitsky points to the primitive organisation of Christian society—the organisation which, he says, is now regarded in the Roman Church as an abominable heresy. This primitive Church was his special ideal of social organisation, founded on equality, liberty, and fraternity. Christianity, in Helchitsky's view, still preserves these elements, and it is only necessary for society to return to its pure doctrine to render unnecessary every other form of social order in which kings and popes are essential; the law of love would alone be sufficient in every case.

"Historically, Helchitsky attributes the degeneration of Christianity to the times of Constantine the Great, whom the Pope Sylvester admitted into the Christian Church with all his heathen morals and life. Constantine, in his turn, endowed the Pope with worldly riches and power. From that time forward these two ruling powers were constantly aiding one another to strive for

nothing but outward glory. Divines and ecclesiastical dignitaries began to concern themselves only about subduing the whole world to their authority, incited men against one another to murder and plunder, and in creed and life reduced Christianity to a nullity. Helchitsky denies completely the right to make war and to inflict the punishment of death; every soldier, even the 'knight,' is only a violent evil-doer, a murderer."

The same account is given by the German book, with the addition of a few biographical details and some extracts from Helchitsky's writings.

Having learnt the drift of Helchitsky's teaching in this way, I awaited all the more impatiently the appearance of the "Net of Truth" in the journal of the Academy. But one year passed, then two and three, and still the book did not appear. It was only in 1888 that I learned that the printing of the book, which had been begun, was stopped. I obtained the proofs of what had been printed and read them through. It is a marvellous book from every point of view.

Its general tenour is given with perfect accuracy by Pypin. Helchitsky's fundamental idea is that Christianity, by allying itself with temporal power in the days of Constantine, and by continuing to develop in

such conditions, has become completely distorted, and has ceased to be Christian altogether. Helchitsky gave the title the "Net of Faith" to his book, taking as his motto the verse of the Gospel about the calling of the disciples to be fishers of men; and, developing this metaphor, he says: "Christ, by means of His disciples, would have caught all the world in His net of faith, but the greater fishes broke the net and escaped out of it, and all the rest have slipped through the holes made by the greater fishes, so that the net has remained quite empty. The greater fishes who broke the net are the rulers, emperors, popes, kings, who have not renounced power, and instead of true Christianity have put on what is simply a mask of it." Helchitsky teaches precisely what has been and is taught in these days by the non-resistant Menonites and Quakers, and in former times by the Bogomilites, Paulicians, and many others. He teaches that Christianity, expecting from its adherents gentleness, meekness, peaceableness, forgiveness of injuries, turning the other cheek when one is struck, and love for enemies, is inconsistent with the use of force, which is an indispensable condition of authority.

The Christian, according to Helchitsky's reasoning, not only cannot be a ruler or a soldier; he cannot take any part in govern-

ment, nor in trade, or even be a landowner; he can only be an artisan or a husbandman.

This book is one of the few works attacking official Christianity which has escaped being burned. All such so-called heretical works were burned at the stake, together with their authors, so that there are few ancient works exposing the errors of official Christianity. The book has a special interest for this reason alone. But apart from its interest from every point of view, it is one of the most remarkable products of thought for its depth of aim, for the astounding strength and beauty of the national language in which it is written, and for its antiquity. And yet for more than four centuries it has remained unprinted, and is still unknown, except to a few learned specialists.

One would have thought that all such works, whether of the Quakers, of Garrison, of Ballou, or of Helchitsky, asserting and proving as they do, on the principles of the Gospel, that our modern world takes a false view of Christ's teaching, would have awakened interest, excitement, talk and discussion among spiritual teachers and their flocks alike.

Works of this kind, dealing with the very essence of Christian doctrine, ought, one would have thought, to have been examined and accepted as true, or refuted and rejected. But nothing of the kind has occurred, and

the same fate has been repeated with all those works. Men of the most diverse views, believers, and, what is surprising, unbelieving liberals also, as though by agreement, all preserve the same persistent silence about them, and all that has been done by people to explain the true meaning of Christ's doctrine remains either ignored or forgotten.

But it is still more astonishing that two other books, of which I heard on the appearance of my book, should be so little known. I mean Dymond's book "On War," published for the first time in London in 1824, and Daniel Musser's book on "Non-resistance," written in 1864. It is particularly astonishing that these books should be unknown, because, apart from their intrinsic merits, both books treat not so much of the theory as of the practical application of the theory to life, of the attitude of Christianity to military service, which is especially important and interesting now in these days of universal conscription.

People will ask, perhaps: how ought a subject to behave who believes that war is inconsistent with his religion while the government demands from him that he should enter military service?

This question is, I think, a most vital one, and the answer to it is specially important in these days of universal conscription. All—or at least the great majority of the people—

are Christians, and all men are called upon for military service. How ought a man, as a Christian, to meet this demand? This is the gist of Dymond's answer:

"His duty is humbly but steadfastly to refuse to serve."

There are some people, who without any definite reasoning about it, conclude straightway that the responsibility of government measures rests entirely on those who resolve on them, or that the governments and sovereigns decide the question of what is good or bad for their subjects, and the duty of the subjects is merely to obey. I think that arguments of this kind only obscure men's conscience. I cannot take part in the councils of government, and therefore I am not responsible for its misdeeds. Indeed, but we are responsible for our own misdeeds. And the misdeeds of our rulers become our own, if we, knowing that they are misdeeds, assist in carrying them out. Those who suppose that they are bound to obey the government, and that the responsibility for the misdeeds they commit is transferred from them to their rulers, deceive themselves. They say: "We give our acts up to the will of others, and our acts cannot be good or bad; there is no merit in what is good nor responsibility for what is evil in our actions, since they are not done of our own will."

It is remarkable that the very same thing

is said in the instructions to soldiers which they make them learn—that is, that the officer is alone responsible for the consequences of his command. But this is not right. A man cannot get rid of the responsibility for his own actions. And that is clear from the following example. If your officer commands you to kill your neighbour's child, to kill your father or your mother, would you obey? If you would not obey, the whole argument falls to the ground, for if you can disobey the governors in one case, where do you draw the line up to which you can obey them? There is no line other than that laid down by Christianity, and that line is both reasonable and practicable.

And therefore we consider it the duty of every man who thinks war inconsistent with Christianity, meekly but firmly to refuse to serve in the army. And let those whose lot it is to act thus, remember that the fulfilment of a great duty rests with them. The destiny of humanity in the world depends, so far as it depends on men at all, on their fidelity to their religion. Let them confess their conviction, and stand up for it, and not in words alone, but in sufferings too, if need be. If you believe that Christ forbade murder, pay no heed to the arguments nor to the commands of those who call on you to bear a hand in it. By such a steadfast refusal to make use of force, you call down on yourselves the bless-

ing promised to those "who hear these sayings and do them," and the time will come when the world will recognise you as having aided in the reformation of mankind."

Musser's book is called "Non-resistance Asserted," or "Kingdoms of Christ and Kingdoms of this World Separated." This book is devoted to the same question, and was written when the American Government was exacting military service from its citizens at the time of the Civil War. And it has, too, a value for all time, dealing with the question how, in such circumstances, people should and can refuse to enter military service. Here is the tenor of the author's introductory remarks: "It is well known that there are many persons in the United States who refuse to fight on grounds of conscience. They are called the 'defenceless,' or 'non-resistant' Christians. These Christians refuse to defend their country, to bear arms, or at the call of government to make war on its enemies. Till lately this religious scruple seemed a valid excuse to the government, and those who urged it were let off service. But at the beginning of our Civil War public opinion was agitated on this subject. It was natural that persons who considered it their duty to bear all the hardships and dangers of war in defence of their country should feel resentment against those persons who had for long shared with them

the advantages of the protection of the government, and who now in time of need and danger would not share in bearing the labours and dangers of its defence. It was even natural that they should declare the attitude of such men monstrous, irrational, and suspicious."

A host of orators and writers, our author tells us, arose to oppose this attitude, and tried to prove the sinfulness of non-resistance, both from Scripture and on common-sense grounds. And this was perfectly natural, and in many cases the authors were right—right, that is, in regard to persons who did not renounce the benefits they received from the government and tried to avoid the hardships of military service, but not right in regard to the principle of non-resistance itself. Above all, our author proves the binding nature of the rule of non-resistance for a Christian, pointing out that this command is perfectly clear, and is enjoined upon every Christian by Christ without possibility of misinterpretation. "Bethink yourselves whether it is righteous to obey man more than God," said Peter and John. And this is precisely what ought to be the attitude of every man who wishes to be Christian to the claim on him for military service, when Christ has said, "Resist not evil by force." As for the question of the principle itself, the author regards that as decided. As to the

second question, whether people have the right to refuse to serve in the army who have not refused the benefits conferred by a government resting on force, the author considers it in detail, and arrives at the conclusion that a Christian, following the law of Christ, since he does not go to war, ought not either to take advantage of any of the institutions of government, courts of law, or elections, and that in his private concerns he must not have recourse to the authorities, the police, or the law. Further on in the book he treats of the relation of the Old Testament to the New, the value of government for those who are Christians, and makes some observations on the doctrine of non-resistance and the attacks made on it. The author concludes his book by saying, "Christians do not need government, and therefore they cannot either obey it in what is contrary to Christ's teaching, nor, still less, take part in it. Christ took His disciples out of the world, he says. They do not expect worldly blessings and worldly happiness, but they expect eternal life. The Spirit in whom they live makes them contented and happy in every position. If the world tolerates them, they are always happy. If the world will not leave them in peace, they will go elsewhere, since they are pilgrims on the earth and they have no fixed place of habitation. They believe that "the dead

may bury their dead." One thing only is needful for them, "to follow their Master."

Even putting aside the question as to the principle laid down in these two books as to the Christian's duty in his attitude to war, one cannot help perceiving the practical importance and the urgent need of deciding the question.

There are people, hundreds of thousands of Quakers, Menonites, all our Douhoborts, Molokani, and others who do not belong to any definite sect, who consider that the use of force—and, consequently, military service—is inconsistent with Christianity. Consequently there are every year among us in Russia some men called upon for military service who refuse to serve on the ground of their religious convictions. Does the government let them off then? No. Does it compel them to go, and in case of disobedience punish them? No.

This was how the government treated them in 1818. Here is an extract from the diary of Nicholas Myravyov, of Kars, which was not passed by the Censure, and is not known in Russia:

"Oct. 2, 1818. TIFLIS.

"In the morning the Commandant told me that five peasants belonging to a landowner in the Tamboff government, had lately been sent to Georgia. These men had been sent for soldiers, but they would not serve; they

had been several times flogged and made to run the gauntlet, but they would submit readily to the cruelest tortures, and even to death, rather than serve. 'Let us go,' they said, 'and leave us alone; we will not hurt any one; all men are equal, and the Tzar is a man like us; why should we pay him tribute; why should I expose my life to danger to kill in battle some man who has done me no harm?'

"'You can cut us to pieces and we will not be soldiers. He who has compassion on us will give us charity, but as for the government rations we have not had them and we do not want to have them.' These were the words of those peasants who declare that there are numbers like them in Russia. They brought them four times before the Committee of Ministers, and at last decided to lay the matter before the Tzar, who gave orders that they should be taken to Georgia for correction, and commanded the Commander-in-Chief to send him a report every month of their gradual success in bringing these peasants to a better mind."

How the correction ended is not known, as the whole episode indeed was unknown, having been kept in profound secrecy.

This was how the government behaved seventy-five years ago—this is how it has behaved in a great number of cases, studiously concealed from the people. And this is how

the government behaves now, except in the case of the German Menonites, living in the province of Kherson, whose plea against military service is considered well grounded. They are made to work off their term of service in labour in the forests.

But in the recent cases of refusal on the part of Menonites to serve in the army on religious grounds, the government authorities have acted in the following manner.

To begin with, they have recourse to every means of coercion used in our times to "correct" the culprit and bring him to "a better mind," and these measures are carried out with the greatest secrecy. I know that in the case of one man who declined to serve in 1884 in Moscow, the official correspondence on the subject had two months after his refusals accumulated into a big folio, and was kept absolutely secret among the Ministry.

They usually begin by sending the culprit to the priests, and the latter, to their shame be it said, always exhort him to obedience. But since the exhortation in Christ's name to forswear Christ is for the most part unsuccessful, after he has received the admonitions of the spiritual authorities, they send him to the gendarmes, and the latter, finding as a rule no political cause for offence in him, despatch him back again, and then he is sent to the learned men, to the doctors, and to the madhouse. During all these vicissitudes he is

deprived of liberty and has to endure every kind of humiliation and suffering as a convicted criminal. (All this has been repeated in four cases.) The doctors let him out of the madhouse, and then every kind of secret shift is employed to prevent him from going free—whereby others would be encouraged to refuse to serve as he has done—and at the same time to avoid leaving him among the soldiers, for fear they too should learn from him that military service is not at all their duty by the law of God, as they are assured, but quite contrary to it.

The most convenient thing for the government would be to kill the non-resistant by flogging him to death or some other means, as was done in former days. But to put a man openly to death, because he believes in the creed we all profess, is impossible. To let a man alone who has refused obedience is also impossible. And so the government tries either to compel the man by ill-treatment to renounce Christ, or in some way or other to get rid of him unobserved, without openly putting him to death, and to hide somehow both the action and the man himself from other people. And so all kinds of shifts and wiles and cruelties are set on foot against him. They either send him to the frontier, or provoke him to insubordination, and then try him for breach of discipline and shut him up in the prison of the disciplinary bat-

talion, where they can ill-treat him freely unseen by every one, or they declare him mad, or lock him up in a lunatic asylum. They sent one man in this way to Tashkend—that is, they pretended to transfer him to the Tashkend army; another to Omsk; a third they convicted of insubordination and shut up in prison; a fourth they sent to a lunatic asylum.

Everywhere the same story is repeated. Not only the government, but the great majority of liberal, advanced people as they are called, studiously turn away from everything that has been said, written or done, or is being done by men to prove the incompatibility of force in its most awful, gross, and glaring form—in the form, that is, of an army of soldiers prepared to murder any one, whoever it may be—with the teachings of Christianity or even of the humanity which society professes as its creed.

So that the information I have gained of the attitude of the higher ruling classes, not only in Russia but in Europe and America, towards the elucidation of this question, has convinced me that there exists in these ruling classes a consciously hostile attitude to true Christianity, which is shown pre-eminently in their reticence in regard to all manifestations of it.

CHAPTER II

CRITICISMS OF THE DOCTRINE OF NON-RESISTANCE TO EVIL BY FORCE ON THE PART OF BELIEVERS AND OF UNBELIEVERS

Fate of the book, "What I Believe"—Evasive character of religious criticisms of principles of my book—1st reply: Use of force not opposed to Christianity—2nd reply: Use of force necessary to restrain evil-doers—3rd reply: Duty of using force in defence of one's neighbour—4th reply: The breach of the command of non-resistance to be regarded simply as a weakness—5th reply: Reply evaded by making believe that the question has long been decided—To devise such subterfuges and to take refuge behind the authority of the Church, of antiquity and of religion, is all that ecclesiastical critics can do to get out of the contradiction between use of force and Christianity in theory and in practice—General attitude of the ecclesiastical world and of the authorities to profession of true Christianity—General character of Russian freethinking critics—Foreign free-thinking critics—Mistaken arguments of these critics the result of misunderstanding the true meaning of Christ's teaching.

THE impression I gained of a desire to conceal, to hush up, what I had tried to express in my book, led me to judge the book itself afresh.

On its appearance it had, as I had anticipated, been forbidden, and ought therefore

by law to have been burnt. But, at the same time, it was discussed among officials, and circulated in a great number of manuscript and lithograph copies, and in translations printed abroad.

And very quickly after the book, criticisms, both religious and secular in character, made their appearance, and these the government tolerated, and even encouraged. So that the refutation of a book which no one was supposed to know anything about was even chosen as the subject for theological dissertations in the academies.

The criticisms of my book, Russian and foreign alike, fall under two general divisions —the religious criticisms of men who regard themselves as believers, and secular criticisms, that is, those of freethinkers.

I will begin with the first class. In my book I make it an accusation against the teachers of the Church that their teaching is opposed to Christ's commands clearly and definitely expressed in the Sermon on the Mount, and opposed in especial to His command in regard to resistance to evil, and that in this way they deprive Christ's teaching of all value. The Church authorities accept the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount on non-resistance to evil by force as divine revelation; and therefore one would have thought that if they felt called upon to write about my book at all, they would have

found it inevitable before everything else to reply to the principal point of my charge against them, and to say plainly, do they or do they not admit the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount and the commandment of non-resistance to evil as binding on a Christian. And they were bound to answer this question, not after the usual fashion (*i.e.*, "that although on the one side one cannot absolutely deny, yet on the other side one cannot again fully assent, all the more seeing that," &c. &c.). No; they should have answered the question as plainly as it was put in my book—Did Christ really demand from His disciples that they should carry out what He taught them in the Sermon on the Mount? And can a Christian, then, or can he not, always remaining a Christian, go to law or make any use of the law, or seek his own protection in the law? And can the Christian, or can he not, remaining a Christian, take part in the administration of government, using compulsion against his neighbours? And—the most important question hanging over the heads of all of us in these days of universal military service—can the Christian, or can he not, remaining a Christian, against Christ's direct prohibition, promise obedience in future actions directly opposed to His teaching? And can he, by taking his share of service in the army, prepare him-

self to murder men, and even actually murder them?

These questions were put plainly and directly, and seemed to require a plain and direct answer; but in all the criticisms of my book there was no such plain and direct answer. No; my book received precisely the same treatment as all the attacks upon the teachers of the Church for their defection from the Law of Christ of which history from the days of Constantine is full.

A very great deal was said in connection with my book of my having incorrectly interpreted this and other passages of the Gospel, of my being in error in not recognising the Trinity, the redemption, and the immortality of the soul. A very great deal was said, but not a word about the one thing which for every Christian is the most essential question in life—how to reconcile the duty of forgiveness, meekness, patience, and love for all, neighbours and enemies alike, which is so clearly expressed in the words of our Teacher, and in the heart of each of us—how to reconcile this duty with the obligation of using force in war upon men of our own or a foreign people.

All that are worth calling answers to this question can be brought under the following five heads. I have tried to bring together in this connection all I could, not only from the criticisms on my book, but from

what has been written in past times on this theme.

The first and crudest form of reply consists in the bold assertion that the use of force is not opposed by the teaching of Christ; that it is permitted, and even enjoined, on the Christian by the Old and New Testaments.

Assertions of this kind proceed, for the most part, from men who have attained the highest ranks in the governing or ecclesiastical hierarchy, and who are consequently perfectly assured that no one will dare to contradict their assertion, and that if any one does contradict it they will hear nothing of the contradiction. These men have, for the most part, through the intoxication of power, so lost the right idea of what that Christianity is in the name of which they hold their position, that what is Christian in Christianity presents itself to them as heresy, while everything in the Old and New Testaments which can be distorted into an antichristian and heathen meaning they regard as the foundation of Christianity. In support of their assertion that Christianity is not opposed to the use of force, these men usually, with the greatest audacity, bring together all the most obscure passages from the Old and New Testaments, interpreting them in the most unchristian way —the punishment of Ananias and Sapphira, of Simon the Sorcerer, &c. They quote all those sayings of Christ's which can possibly

be interpreted as justification of cruelty: the expulsion from the Temple; "It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom than for this city," &c. &c. According to these people's notions, a Christian government is not in the least bound to be guided by the spirit of peace, forgiveness of injuries, and love for enemies.

To refute such an assertion is useless, because the very people who make this assertion refute themselves, or, rather, renounce Christ, inventing a Christianity and a Christ of their own in the place of Him in whose name the Church itself exists, as well as their office in it. If all men were to learn that the Church professes to believe in a Christ of punishment and warfare, not of forgiveness, no one would believe in the Church, and it could not prove to any one what it is trying to prove.

The second, somewhat less gross form of argument, consists in declaring that, though Christ did indeed preach that we should turn the left cheek, and give the cloak also, and this is the highest moral duty; yet that there are wicked men in the world, and if these wicked men were not restrained by force, the whole world and all good men would come to ruin through them. This argument I found for the first time in John Chrysostom, and I show how he is mistaken in my book, "What I Believe."

This argument is ill-grounded, because if we allow ourselves to regard any men as intrinsically wicked men, then in the first place we annul, by so doing, the whole idea of the Christian teaching, according to which we are all equals and brothers, as sons of one Father in heaven. Secondly, it is ill-founded, because even if to use force against wicked men had been permitted by God, since it is impossible to find a perfect and unfailing distinction by which one could positively know the wicked from the good, so it would come to all individual men and societies of men mutually regarding each other as wicked men, as is the case now. Thirdly, even if it were possible to distinguish the wicked from the good unfailingly, even then it would be impossible to kill or injure or shut up in prison these wicked men, because there would be no one in a Christian society to carry out such punishment, since every Christian, as a Christian, has been commanded to use no force against the wicked.

The third kind of answer, still more subtle than the preceding, consists in asserting that though the command of non-resistance to evil by force is binding on the Christian when the evil is directed against himself personally, it ceases to be binding when the evil is directed against his neighbours, and that then the Christian is not only not bound to fulfil the commandment, but is even bound to act in

opposition to it in defence of his neighbours and to use force against transgressors by force. This assertion is an absolute assumption, and one cannot find in all Christ's teaching any confirmation of such an argument. Such an argument is not only a limitation, but a direct contradiction and negation of the commandment. If every man has the right to have recourse to force in face of a danger threatening another, the question of the use of force is reduced to a question of the definition of danger for another. If my private judgment is to decide the question of what is danger for another, there is no occasion for the use of force, which could not be justified on the ground of danger threatening some other man. They killed and burnt witches, they killed aristocrats and girondists, they killed their enemies, because those who were in authority regarded them as dangerous for the people.

If this important limitation, which fundamentally undermines the whole value of the commandment, had entered into Christ's meaning, there must have been mention of it somewhere. This restriction is made nowhere in our Saviour's life or preaching. On the contrary, warning is given precisely against this treacherous and scandalous restriction which nullifies the commandment. The error and impossibility of such a limitation is shown in the Gospel with special clearness in the

account of the judgment of Caiaphas, who makes precisely this distinction. He acknowledged that it was wrong to punish the innocent Jesus, but he saw in Him a source of danger not for himself, but for the whole people, and therefore he said: It is better for one man to die that the whole people perish not. And the erroneousness of such a limitation is still more clearly expressed in the words spoken to Peter when he tried to resist by force evil directed against Jesus (Matt. xxvi. 52). Peter was not defending himself, but his beloved and heavenly Master. And Christ at once reproved him for this, saying, that he who takes up the sword shall perish by the sword.

Besides apologies for violence used against one's neighbour in defence of another neighbour from greater violence are always untrustworthy, because when force is used against one who has not yet carried out his evil intent, I can never know which would be greater—the evil of my act of violence or of the act I want to prevent. We kill the criminal that society may be rid of him, and we never know whether the criminal of to-day would not have been a changed man to-morrow, and whether our punishment of him is not useless cruelty. We shut up the dangerous—as we think—member of society, but the next day this man might cease to be dangerous and his imprisonment might be for

nothing. I see that a man I know to be a ruffian is pursuing a young girl. I have a gun in my hand—I kill the ruffian and save the girl. But the death or the wounding of the ruffian has positively taken place, while what would have happened if this had not been I cannot know. And what an immense mass of evil must result, and indeed does result, from allowing men to assume the right of anticipating what may happen. Ninety-nine per cent. of the evil of the world is founded on this reasoning—from the inquisition to dynamite bombs, and the executions or punishments of tens of thousands of political criminals.

A fourth, still more refined, reply to the question, What ought to be the Christian's attitude to Christ's command of non-resistance to evil by force? consists in declaring that they do not deny the command of non-resistance to evil, but recognise it; but they only do not ascribe to this command the special exclusive value attached to it by sectarians. To regard this command as the indispensable condition of Christian life, as Garrison, Ballou, Dymond, the Quakers, the Menonites, and the Shakers do now, and as the Moravian brothers, the Waldenses, the Albigenses, the Bogomilites, and the Paulicians did in the past, is a one-sided heresy. This command has neither more nor less value than all the other commands, and the man who through weakness

transgresses any command whatever, the command of non-resistance included, does not cease to be a Christian if he hold the true faith. This is a very skilful device, and many people who wish to be deceived are easily deceived by it. The device consists in reducing a direct conscious denial of a command to a casual breach of it. But one need only compare the attitude of the teachers of the Church to this and to other commands which they really do recognise, to be convinced that their attitude to this is completely different from their attitude to other duties.

The command against fornication they do really recognise, and consequently they do not admit that in any case fornication can cease to be wrong. The Church preachers never point out cases in which the command against fornication can be broken, and always teach that we must avoid seductions which lead to temptation to fornication. But not so with the command of non-resistance. All Church preachers recognise cases in which that command can be broken, and teach the people accordingly. And they not only do not teach that we should avoid temptations to break it, chief of which is the military oath, but they themselves administer it. The preachers of the Church never in any other case advocate the breaking of any other commandment. But in connection with the commandment of non-resistance they openly teach that we must not

understand it too literally, but that there are conditions and circumstances in which we must do the direct opposite, that is, go to law, fight, punish. So that occasions for fulfilling the commandment of non-resistance to evil by force are taught for the most part as occasions for not fulfilling it. The fulfilment of this command, they say, is very difficult and pertains only to perfection. And how can it not be difficult, when the breach of it is not only not forbidden, but law-courts, prisons, cannons, guns, armies, and wars are under the immediate sanction of the Church. It cannot be true, then, that this command is recognised by the preachers of the Church as on a level with other commands.

The preachers of the Church clearly do not recognise it; only not daring to acknowledge this, they try to conceal their not recognising it.

So much for the fourth reply.

The fifth kind of answer, which is the subtlest, the most often used and the most effective, consists in avoiding answering, in making believe that this question is one which has long ago been decided perfectly clearly and satisfactorily, and that it is not worth while to talk about it. This method of reply is employed by all the more or less cultivated religious writers, that is to say, those who feel the laws of Christ binding for themselves. Knowing that the contradiction exist-

ing between the teaching of Christ which we profess with our lips and the whole order of our lives, cannot be removed by words, and that touching upon it can only make it more obvious, they, with more or less ingenuity, evade it, pretending that the question of reconciling Christianity with the use of force has been decided already, or does not exist at all.*

The majority of religious critics of my book use this fifth method of replying to it. I could quote dozens of such critics, in all of whom, without exception, we find the same thing repeated: everything is discussed except what constitutes the principal subject of the book. As a characteristic example of such criticisms, I will quote the article of a well-known and ingenious English writer and

* I only know one work which differs somewhat from this general definition, and that is not a criticism in the precise meaning of the word, but an article treating of the same subject and having my book in view. I mean the pamphlet of Mr. Troizky (published at Kazan), "A Sermon for the People." The author obviously accepts Christ's teaching in its true meaning. He says that the prohibition of resistance to evil by force means exactly what it does mean; and the same with the prohibition of swearing. He does not, as others do, deny the meaning of Christ's teaching, but unfortunately he does not draw from this admission the inevitable deductions which present themselves spontaneously in our life when we understand Christ's teaching in that way. If we must not oppose evil by force, nor swear, every one naturally asks, "How then about military service, and the oath of obedience?" To this question the author gives no reply; but it must be answered. And if he cannot answer, then he would do better not to speak on the subject at all, as such silence leads to error.

preacher—Farrar—who, like many learned theologians, is a great master of the art of circuitously evading a question. The article was published in an American journal, the *Forum*, in October 1888.

After conscientiously explaining in brief the contents of my book, Farrar says: "Tolstoi came to the conclusion that a coarse deceit had been palmed upon the world when these words, 'Resist not evil,' were held by civil society to be compatible with war, courts of justice, capital punishment, divorce, oaths, national prejudice, and, indeed, with most of the institutions of civil and social life. He now believes that the kingdom of God would come if all men kept these five commandments of Christ, viz.:

- 1. Live in peace with all men.
- 2. Be pure.
- 3. Take no oaths.
- 4. Resist not evil.
- 5. Renounce national distinctions."

"Tolstoi," he says, "rejects the inspiration of the Old Testament; hence he rejects the chief doctrines of the Church—that of the Atonement by blood, the Trinity, the descent of the Holy Ghost on the Apostles, and His transmission through the priesthood." And he recognises only the words and commands of Christ. "But is this interpretation of Christ a true one?" he says. "Are all men bound to act as Tolstoi teaches—*i.e.*, to carry out these five commandments of Christ?" You expect, then, that in answer to this essential

question, which is the only one that could induce a man to write an article about the book, he will say either that this interpretation of Christ's teaching is true and we ought to follow it, or he will say that such an interpretation is untrue, will show why, and will give some other correct interpretation of those words which I interpret incorrectly. But nothing of the kind is done. Farrar only expresses his "belief" that, "though actuated by the noblest sincerity, Count Tolstoi has been misled by partial and one-sided interpretations of the meaning of the Gospel and the mind and will of Christ." What this error consists in is not made clear; it is only said: "To enter into the proof of this is impossible in this article, for I have already exceeded the space at my command."

And he concludes, in a tranquil spirit:

"Meanwhile, the reader who feels troubled lest it should be his duty also to forsake all the conditions of his life and to take up the position and work of a common labourer, may rest for the present on the principle, *securus judicat orbis terrarum*. With few and rare exceptions," he continues, "the whole of Christendom, from the days of the Apostles down to our own, has come to the firm conclusion that it was the object of Christ to lay down great eternal principles, but not to disturb the bases and revolutionise the insti-

tutions of all human society, which themselves rest on divine sanctions as well as on inevitable conditions. Were it my object to prove how untenable is the doctrine of communism, based by Count Tolstoi upon the divine paradoxes (*sic*), which can be interpreted only on historical principles in accordance with the whole method of the teaching of Jesus, it would require an ampler canvas than I have here at my disposal." What a pity he has not "an ampler canvas at his disposal"! And what a strange thing it is that for all these last fifteen centuries no one has had "a canvas ample enough" to prove that Christ, whom we profess to believe in, says something utterly unlike what He does say! Still, they could prove it if they wanted to. But it is not worth while to prove what every one knows; it is enough to say, "*securus judicat orbis terrarum.*"

And of this kind, without exception, are all the criticisms of educated believers, who must, as such, understand the danger of their position. The sole escape from it for them lies in their hope that they may be able, by using the authority of the Church, of antiquity, and of their sacred office, to overawe the reader and draw him away from the idea of reading the Gospel for himself and thinking out the question in his own mind for himself. And in this they are successful; for, indeed, how could the notion occur to any one that all

that has been repeated from century to century with such earnestness and solemnity by all those archdeacons, bishops, archbishops, holy synods, and popes, is all of it a base lie and a calumny foisted upon Christ by them for the sake of keeping safe the money they must have to live luxuriously on the necks of other men? And it is a lie and a calumny so transparent that the only way of keeping it up consists in overawing people by their earnestness, their conscientiousness. It is just what has taken place of late years at recruiting sessions; at a table before the zertsal—the symbol of the Tzar's authority—in the seat of honour under the life-size portrait of the Tzar, sit dignified old officials, wearing decorations, conversing freely and easily, writing notes, summoning men before them, and giving orders. Here, wearing a cross on his breast, near them, is a prosperous-looking old priest in a silken cassock, with long grey hair flowing on to his cope, before a lectern which bears a golden cross and has on it a Gospel bound in gold.

They summon Ivan Petroff. A young man comes in, wretchedly, shabbily dressed, and in terror, the muscles of his face working, his eyes bright and restless; and in a broken voice hardly above a whisper, he says: "I by Christ's law as a Christian I cannot." "What is he muttering?" asks the president, frowning impatiently and

raising his eyes from his book to listen. "Speak louder," the colonel with shining epaulettes shouts to him. "I—I as a Christian. . . ." And at last it appears that the young man refuses to serve in the army because he is a Christian. "Don't talk nonsense. Stand to be measured. Doctor, may I trouble you to measure him. He is all right?" "Yes." "Reverend father, administer the oath to him."

No one is the least disturbed by what the poor scared young man is muttering. They do not even pay attention to it. "They all mutter something, but we've no time to listen to it, we have to enrol so many."

The recruit tries to say something still. "It's opposed to the law of Christ." "Go along, go along, we know without your help what is opposed to the law and what's not, and you, soothe his mind, Reverend Father, soothe him. Next: Vassily Nikitin." And they lead the trembling youth away. And it does not strike any one—the guards, or Vassily Nikitin, whom they are bringing in, or any of the spectators of this scene—that these inarticulate words of the young man, at once suppressed by the authorities, contain the truth, and that the loud, solemnly uttered sentences of the calm, self-confident official and the priest are a lie and a deception.

Such is the impression produced not only by Farrar's article, but by all those solemn

sermons, articles, and books which make their appearance from all sides, directly there is anywhere a glimpse of truth exposing a predominant falsehood. At once begins the series of long, clever, ingenious and solemn speeches and writings, which deal with questions nearly related to the subject, but skilfully avoid touching the subject itself.

That is the essence of the fifth and most effective means of getting out of the contradictions in which Church Christianity has placed itself, by professing its faith in Christ's teaching in words, while it denies it in its life, and teaches people to do the same.

Those who justify themselves by the first method, directly, crudely asserting that Christ sanctioned violence, wars, and murder, repudiate Christ's doctrine directly; those who find their defence in the second, the third, or the fourth method, are confused and can easily be convicted of error; but this last class, who do not argue, who do not condescend to argue about it, but take shelter behind their own grandeur, and make a show of all this having been decided by them or at least by some one long ago, and no longer offering a possibility of doubt to any one—they seem safe from attack, and will be beyond attack till men come to realise that they are under the narcotic influence exerted on them by Governments and Churches, and are no longer affected by it.

Such was the attitude of the spiritual

critics—*i.e.*, those professing faith in Christ—to my book. And their attitude could not have been different. They are bound to take up this attitude by the contradictory position in which they find themselves between belief in the divinity of their Master and disbelief in His clearest utterances, and they want to escape from this contradiction. So that one cannot expect from them free discussion of the very essence of the question—that is, of the change in men's life which must result from applying Christ's teaching to the existing order of the world. Such free discussion I only expected from worldly, freethinking critics who are not bound to Christ's teaching in any way, and can therefore take an independent view of it. I had anticipated that freethinking writers would look at Christ, not merely, like the Churchmen, as the founder of a religion of personal salvation, but, to express it in their language, as a reformer who laid down new principles of life and destroyed the old, and whose reforms are not yet complete, but are still in progress even now.

Such a view of Christ and His teaching follows from my book. But to my astonishment, out of the great number of critics of my book there was not one, either Russian or foreign, who treated the subject from the side from which it was approached in the book—that is, who criticised Christ's doc-

trines as philosophical, moral, and social principles, to use their scientific expressions.

This was not done in a single criticism. The freethinking Russian critics taking my book as though its whole contents could be reduced to non-resistance to evil, and understanding the doctrine of non-resistance to evil itself (no doubt for greater convenience in refuting it) as though it would prohibit every kind of conflict with evil, fell vehemently upon this doctrine, and for some years past have been very successfully proving that Christ's teaching is mistaken in so far as it forbids resistance to evil. Their refutations of this hypothetical doctrine of Christ were all the more successful, since they knew beforehand that their arguments could not be contested or corrected, for the Censorship, not having passed the book, did not pass articles in its defence.

It is a remarkable thing that among us, where one cannot say a word about the Holy Scriptures without the prohibition of the Censorship, for some years past there have been in all the journals constant attacks and criticisms on the command of Christ simply and directly stated in Matt. v. 39. The Russian advanced critics, obviously unaware of all that has been done to elucidate the question of non-resistance, and sometimes even imagining apparently that the rule of non-resistance to evil had

been invented by me personally, fell foul of the very idea of it. They opposed it and attacked it, and advancing with great heat arguments, which had long ago been analysed and refuted from every point of view, they demonstrated that a man ought invariably to defend (with violence) all the injured and oppressed, and that thus the doctrine of non-resistance to evil is an immoral doctrine.

To all Russian critics the whole import of Christ's command seemed reducible to the fact that it would hinder them from the active opposition to evil to which they are accustomed. So that the principle of non-resistance to evil by force has been attacked by two opposing camps: the conservatives, because this principle would hinder their activity in resistance to evil, as applied to the revolutionists, in persecution and punishment of them; the revolutionists, too, because this principle would hinder their resistance to evil, as applied to the conservatives and the overthrowing of them. The conservatives were indignant at the doctrine of non-resistance to evil by force hindering the energetic destruction of the revolutionary elements, which may ruin the national prosperity; the revolutionists were indignant at the doctrine of non-resistance to evil by force hindering the overthrow of the conservatives, who are ruining the national prosperity.

It is worthy of remark in this connection that the revolutionists have attacked the principle of non-resistance to evil by force, in spite of the fact that it is the greatest terror and danger for every despotism. For ever since the beginning of the world, the use of violence of every kind, from the Inquisition to the Schlüsselburg fortress, has rested and still rests on the opposite principle of the necessity of resisting evil by force.

Besides this, the Russian critics have pointed out the fact that the application of the command of non-resistance to practical life would turn mankind aside out of the path of civilisation along which it is moving. The path of civilisation on which mankind in Europe is moving is, in their opinion, the one along which all mankind ought always to move.

So much for the general character of the Russian critics.

Foreign critics started from the same premisses, but their discussions of my book were somewhat different from those of Russian critics, not only in being less bitter, and in showing more culture, but even in the subject-matter.

In discussing my book and the Gospel teaching generally, as it is expressed in the Sermon on the Mount, the foreign critics maintained that such doctrine is not pecu-

liarily Christian (Christian doctrine is either Catholicism or Protestantism according to their views)—the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount is only a string of very pretty impracticable dreams *du charmant docteur*, as Renan says, fit for the simple and half-savage inhabitants of Galilee who lived 1800 years ago, and for the half-savage Russian peasants—Sutaev and Bondarev—and the Russian mystic Tolstoi, but not at all consistent with a high degree of European culture.

The foreign freethinking critics have tried in a delicate manner, without being offensive to me, to give the impression that my conviction that mankind could be guided by such a naïve doctrine as that of the Sermon on the Mount, proceeds from two causes: that such a conviction is partly due to my want of knowledge, my ignorance of history, my ignorance of all the vain attempts to apply the principles of the Sermon on the Mount to life, which have been made in history and have led to nothing; and partly it is due to my failing to appreciate the full value of the lofty civilisation to which mankind has attained at present, with its Krupp cannons, smokeless powder, colonisation of Africa, Irish Coercion Bill, parliamentary government, journalism, strikes, and the Eiffel Tower.

So wrote de Vogué, and Leroy Beaulieu, and Matthew Arnold; so wrote the American

author, Savage, and Ingersoll, the popular freethinking American preacher, and many others.

"Christ's teaching is no use, because it is inconsistent with our industrial age," says Ingersoll, naïvely, expressing in this utterance, with perfect directness and simplicity, the exact notion of Christ's teaching held by persons of refinement and culture of our times. The teaching is no use for our industrial age, precisely as though the existence of this industrial age were a sacred fact, which ought not to and could not be changed. It is just as though drunkards, when advised how they could be brought to habits of sobriety, should answer that the advice is incompatible with their habit of taking alcohol.

The arguments of all the freethinking critics, Russian and foreign alike, different as they may be in tone and manner of presentation, all amount essentially to the same strange misapprehension—namely, that Christ's teaching, one of the consequences of which is non-resistance to evil, is of no use to us because it requires a change of our life.

Christ's teaching is useless because, if it were carried into practice, life could not go on as at present; we must add: if we have begun by living sinfully, as we do live and are accustomed to live. Not only is the question of non-resistance to evil not dis-

cussed ; the very mention of the fact that the duty of non-resistance enters into Christ's teaching is regarded as satisfactory proof of the impracticability of the whole teaching.

Meanwhile one would have thought it was necessary to point out at least some kind of solution of the following question, since it is at the root of almost everything that interests us.

The question amounts to this : in what way are we to decide men's disputes, when some men consider evil what others consider good ; and *vice versa* ? And to reply that that is evil which I think evil, in spite of the fact that my opponent thinks it good, is not a solution of the difficulty. There can only be two solutions : either to find a real unquestionable criterion of what is evil, or not to resist evil by force.

The first course has been tried ever since the beginning of historical times, and as we all know it has not hitherto led to any successful results.

The second solution : not forcibly to resist what we consider evil until we have found a universal criterion—that is the solution given by Christ.

We may consider the answer given by Christ unsatisfactory ; we may replace it by another and better, by finding a criterion by which evil could be defined for all men unanimously and simultaneously ; we may

simply, like savage nations, not recognise the existence of the question. But we cannot treat the question as the learned critics of Christianity do. They pretend either that no such question exists at all, or that the question is solved by granting to certain persons or assemblies of persons the right to define evil and to resist it by force. But we know all the while that granting such a right to certain persons does not decide the question (still less so when we are ourselves the certain persons), since there are always people who do not recognise this right in the authorised persons or assemblies.

But this assumption, that what seems evil to us is really evil, shows a complete misunderstanding of the question, and lies at the root of the argument of freethinking critics about the Christian religion. In this way, then, the discussions of my book on the part of Churchmen and freethinking critics alike showed me that the majority of men simply do not understand either Christ's teaching or the questions which Christ's teaching solves.

CHAPTER III

CHRISTIANITY MISUNDERSTOOD BY BELIEVERS

Meaning of Christian doctrine, understood by a minority, has become completely incomprehensible for the majority of men—Reason of this to be found in misinterpretation of Christianity and mistaken conviction of believers and unbelievers alike that they understand it—The meaning of Christianity obscured for believers by the Church—The first appearance of Christ's teaching—Its essence and difference from heathen religions—Christianity not fully comprehended at the beginning, became more and more clear to those who accepted it from its correspondence with truth—Simultaneously with this arose the claim to possession of the authentic meaning of the doctrine based on the miraculous nature of its transmission—Assembly of disciples as described in the Acts—The authoritative claim to the sole possession of the true meaning of Christ's teaching supported by miraculous evidence has led by logical development to the Creeds of the Churches—A Church could not be founded by Christ—Definitions of a Church according to the Catechisms—The Churches have always been several in number and hostile to one another—What is heresy—The work of G. Arnold on heresies—Heresies the manifestations of progress in the Churches—Churches cause dissension among men, and are always hostile to Christianity—Account of the work done by the Russian Church—Matt. xxiii. 23—The Sermon on the Mount or the Creed—The Orthodox Church conceals from the people the true meaning of Christianity—The same thing is done by the other Churches—All the external conditions of modern life are such as to destroy the doctrine of the Church, and therefore the Churches use every effort to support their doctrines.

THUS the information I received, after my book came out, went to show that the Christian doctrine, in its direct and simple sense, was understood and had always been understood, by a minority of men, while the critics, ecclesiastical and freethinking alike, denied the possibility of taking Christ's teaching in its direct sense. All this convinced me that while on one hand the true understanding of this doctrine had never been lost to a minority, but had been established more and more clearly, on the other hand the meaning of it had been more and more obscured for the majority. So that at last such a depth of obscurity has been reached that men do not take in their direct sense even the simplest precepts, expressed in the simplest words, in the Gospel.

Christ's teaching is not generally understood in its true, simple, and direct sense even in these days, when the light of the Gospel has penetrated even to the darkest recesses of human consciousness, when, in the words of Christ, that which was spoken in the ear is proclaimed from the house-tops; and when the Gospel is influencing every side of human life—domestic, economic, civic, legislative, and international. This lack of true understanding of Christ's words at such a time would be inexplicable, if there were not causes to account for it.

One of these causes is the fact that believers

and unbelievers alike are firmly persuaded that they have understood Christ's teaching a long time, and that they understand it so fully, indubitably, and conclusively, that it can have no other significance than the one they attribute to it. And the reason of this conviction is that the false interpretation and consequent misapprehension of the Gospel is an error of such long standing. Even the strongest current of water cannot add a drop to a cup which is already full.

The most difficult subjects can be explained to the most slow-witted man if he has not formed any idea of them already; but the simplest thing cannot be made clear to the most intelligent man if he is firmly persuaded that he knows already, without a shadow of doubt, what is laid before him.

The Christian doctrine is presented to the men of our world to-day as a doctrine which every one has known so long and accepted so unhesitatingly in all its minutest details, that it cannot be understood in any other way than it is understood now.

Christianity is understood now by all who profess the doctrines of the Church as a supernatural miraculous revelation of everything which is repeated in the Creed. By unbelievers it is regarded as an illustration of man's craving for a belief in the supernatural, which mankind has now outgrown, as an historical phenomenon which has received

full expression in Catholicism, Greek Orthodoxy and Protestantism, and has no longer any living significance for us. The significance of the Gospel is hidden from believers by the Church, from unbelievers by Science.

I will speak first of the former. Eighteen hundred years ago there appeared in the midst of the heathen Roman world a strange new doctrine, unlike any of the old religions, and attributed to a man, Christ.

This new doctrine was in both form and content absolutely new to the Jewish world in which it originated, and still more to the Roman world in which it was preached and diffused.

In the midst of the elaborate religious observances of Judaism, in which, in the words of Isaiah, law was laid upon law, and in the midst of the Roman legal system worked out to the highest point of perfection, a new doctrine appeared, which denied not only every deity, and all fear and worship of them, but even all human institutions and all necessity for them. In place of all the rules of the old religions, this doctrine sets up only a type of inward perfection, truth and love in the person of Christ, and—as a result of this inward perfection being attained by men—also the outward perfection foretold by the prophets—the kingdom of God, when all men will cease to learn to make war, when all shall be taught

of God and united in love, and the lion will lie down with the lamb. Instead of the threats of punishment which all the old laws of religions and governments alike laid down for non-fulfilment of their rules, instead of promises of rewards for fulfilment of them, this doctrine called men to it only because it was the truth. John vii. 17 : "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." John viii. 46 : "If I say the truth, why do ye not believe Me ? But ye seek to kill Me, a man that hath told you the truth. Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. Keep my sayings, and ye shall know of my sayings whether they be true." No proofs of this doctrine were offered except its truth, the correspondence of the doctrine with the truth. The whole teaching consisted in the recognition of truth and following it, in a greater and greater attainment of truth, and a closer and closer following of it in the acts of life. There are no acts in this doctrine which could justify a man and make him saved. There is only the image of truth to guide him, for inward perfection in the person of Christ and for outward perfection in the establishment of the kingdom of God. The fulfilment of this teaching consists only in walking in the chosen way, in getting

nearer to inward perfection in the imitation of Christ, and outward perfection in the establishment of the kingdom of God. The greater or less blessedness of a man depends, according to this doctrine, not on the degree of perfection to which he has attained, but on the greater or less swiftness with which he is pursuing it.

The progress towards perfection of the publican Zaccheus, of the woman that was a sinner, of the robber on the cross, is a greater state of blessedness, according to this doctrine, than the stationary righteousness of the Pharisee. The lost sheep is dearer than ninety-nine that were not lost. The prodigal son, the piece of money that was lost and found again, are dearer, more precious to God than those which have not been lost.

Every condition, according to this doctrine, is only a particular step in the attainment of inward and outward perfection, and therefore has no significance of itself. Blessedness consists in progress towards perfection; to stand still in any condition whatever means the cessation of this blessedness.

“Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth.” “No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.” “Rejoice not that the spirits are subject to you, but seek rather that your names be written in heaven.” “Be ye perfect, even as your Father in

heaven is perfect." "Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness."

The fulfilment of this precept is only to be found in uninterrupted progress towards the attainment of ever higher truth, towards establishing more and more firmly an ever greater love within oneself, and establishing more and more widely the Kingdom of God outside oneself.

It is obvious that, appearing as it did in the midst of the Jewish and heathen world, such teaching could not be accepted by the majority of men, who were living a life absolutely different from what was required by it. It is obvious, too, that even for those by whom it was accepted, it was so absolutely opposed to all their old views that it could not be comprehensible in its full significance.

It has been only by a succession of misunderstandings, errors, partial explanations, and the corrections and additions of generations, that the meaning of the Christian doctrine has grown continually more and more clear to men. The Christian view of life has exerted an influence on the Jewish and heathen, and the heathen and Jewish view of life has, too, exerted an influence on the Christian. And Christianity, as the living force, has gained more and more upon the extinct Judaism and heathenism, and has grown continually clearer and clearer, as it freed itself from the admixture of

falsehood which had overlaid it. Men went further and further in the attainment of the meaning of Christianity, and realised it more and more in life.

The longer mankind lived, the clearer and clearer became the meaning of Christianity, as must always be the case with every theory of life.

Succeeding generations corrected the errors of their predecessors, and grew ever nearer and nearer to a comprehension of the true meaning. It was thus from the very earliest times of Christianity. And so, too, from the earliest times of Christianity there were men who began to assert on their own authority that the meaning they attribute to the doctrine is the only true one, and as proof bring forward supernatural occurrences in support of the correctness of their interpretation.

This was the principal cause at first of the misunderstanding of the doctrine, and afterwards of the complete distortion of it.

It was supposed that Christ's teaching was transmitted to men, not like every other truth, but in a special miraculous way. Thus the truth of the teaching was not proved by its correspondence with the needs of the mind and the whole nature of man, but by the miraculous manner of its transmission, which was advanced as an irrefutable proof of the truth of the interpretation

put on it. This hypothesis originated from misunderstanding of the teaching, and its result was to make it impossible to understand it rightly.

And this happened first in the earliest times, when the doctrine was still not so fully understood and often interpreted wrongly, as we see by the Gospels and the Acts. The less the doctrine was understood, the more obscure it appeared and the more necessary were external proofs of its truth. The proposition that we ought not to do unto others as we would not they should do unto us, did not need to be proved by miracles and needed no exercise of faith, because this proposition is in itself convincing and in harmony with man's mind and nature; but the proposition that Christ was God had to be proved by miracles completely beyond our comprehension.

The more the understanding of Christ's teaching was obscured, the more the miraculous was introduced into it; and the more the miraculous was introduced into it, the more the doctrine was strained from its meaning and the more obscure it became; and the more it was strained from its meaning and the more obscure it became, the more strongly its infallibility had to be asserted, and the less comprehensible the doctrine became.

One can see by the Gospels, the Acts, and

the Epistles, how from the earliest times the non-comprehension of the doctrine called forth the need for proofs through the miraculous and incomprehensible.

The first example in the book of Acts is the assembly which gathered together in Jerusalem to decide the question which had arisen, whether to baptize or not the uncircumcised and those who had eaten of food sacrificed to idols.

The very fact of this question being raised showed that those who discussed it did not understand the teaching of Christ, who rejected all outward observances—ablutions, purifications, fasts, and sabbaths. It was plainly said “not that which goeth into a man’s mouth, but that which cometh out of a man’s mouth, defileth him,” and therefore the question of baptizing the uncircumcised could only have arisen among men who, though they loved their Master and dimly felt the grandeur of His teaching, still did not understand the teaching itself very clearly. And this was the fact.

Just in proportion to the failure of the members of the assembly to understand the doctrine, was their need of external confirmation of their incomplete interpretation of it. And then to settle this question, the very asking of which proved their misunderstanding of the doctrine, there was uttered in this assembly, as is described in the Acts, that

strange phrase, which was for the first time found necessary to give external confirmation to certain assertions, and which has been productive of so much evil.

That is, it was asserted that the correctness of what they had decided was guaranteed by the miraculous participation of the Holy Ghost, that is of God, in their decision. But the assertion that the Holy Ghost, that is, God, spoke through the Apostles, in its turn, wanted proof. And thus it was necessary to confirm this, that the Holy Ghost should descend at Pentecost in tongues of fire upon those who made this assertion. (In the account of it, the descent of the Holy Ghost precedes the assembly, but the book of Acts was written much later than both events.) But the descent of the Holy Ghost, too, had to be proved for those who had not seen the tongues of fire (though it is not easy to understand why a tongue of fire burning above a man's head should prove that what that man is going to say will be infallibly the truth). And so arose the necessity for still more miracles and changes, raisings of the dead to life, and strikings of the living dead, and all those marvels which have been a stumbling-block to men, of which the Acts is full, and which, far from ever convincing one of the truth of the Christian doctrine, can only repel men from it. The result of such a means of confirm-

ing the truth was that the more these confirmations of truth by tales of miracles were heaped up one after another, the more the doctrine was distorted from its original meaning, and the more incomprehensible it became.

Thus it was from the earliest times and so it went on, constantly increasing till it reached in our day the logical climax of the dogmas of transubstantiation and the infallibility of the pope, or of the bishops, or of Scripture, and of requiring a blind faith rendered incomprehensible and utterly meaningless, not in God but in Christ, not in a doctrine but in a person, as in Catholicism, or in persons, as in Greek Orthodoxy, or in a book, as in Protestantism. The more widely Christianity was diffused, and the greater the number of people unprepared for it who were brought under its sway, the less it was understood, the more absolutely was its infallibility insisted on, and the less possible it became to understand the true meaning of the doctrine. In the times of Constantine the whole interpretation of the doctrine had been already reduced to a *résumé*—supported by the temporal authority—of the disputes that had taken place in the Council—to a creed which reckoned off—I believe in so and so, and so and so, and so and so to the end—to one holy, Apostolic Church, which means the infallibility of those persons

who called themselves the Church. So that it all amounts to a man no longer believing in God, nor Christ, as they are revealed to him, but believing in what the Church orders him to believe in.

But the Church is holy: the Church was founded by Christ. God could not leave men to interpret His teaching at random—therefore He founded the Church. All those statements are so utterly untrue and unfounded that one is ashamed to refute them. Nowhere, nor in anything, except in the assertion of the Church, can we find that God or Christ founded anything like what Churchmen understand by the Church. In the Gospels there is a warning against the Church, as it is an external authority, a warning most clear and obvious in the passage where it is said that Christ's followers should "call no man master." But nowhere is anything said of the foundation of what Churchmen call the Church.

The word church is used twice in the Gospels—once in the sense of an assembly of men to decide a dispute; the other time in connection with the obscure utterance about a stone—Peter, and the gates of hell. From these two passages in which the word church is used, in the signification merely of an assembly, has been deduced all that we now understand by the Church.

But Christ could not have founded the

Church, that is what we now understand by that word. For nothing like the idea of the Church as we know it now, with its sacraments, miracles, and above all its claim to infallibility, is to be found either in Christ's words or in the ideas of the men of that time.

The fact that men called what was formed afterwards by the same word as Christ used for something totally different, does not give them the right to assert that Christ founded the one true Church.

Besides, if Christ had really founded such an institution as the Church for the foundation of all His teaching and the whole faith, He would certainly have described this institution clearly and definitely, and would have given the only true Church, besides tales of miracles, which are used to support every kind of superstition, some tokens so unmistakable that no doubt of its genuineness could ever have arisen. But nothing of the sort was done by Him. And there have been and still are different institutions, each calling itself the true Church.

The Catholic Catechism says: "L'Église est la société des fidèles établie par notre Seigneur Jésus Christ, répandue sur toute la terre et soumise à l'autorité des pasteurs légitimes principalement notre Saint Père le Pape ;" * understanding by the words

* The Church is the society of the faithful, established by our Lord Jesus Christ, spread over the whole earth, and
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"pasteurs légitimes" an association of men having the Pope at its head, and consisting of certain individuals bound together by a certain organisation.

The Greek Orthodox Catechism says: "The Church is a society founded upon earth by Jesus Christ, which is united into one whole by one divine doctrine and by sacraments under the rule and guidance of a priesthood appointed by God;" meaning by the "priesthood appointed by God" the Greek Orthodox priesthood, consisting of certain individuals who happen to be in such or such positions.

The Lutheran Catechism says: "The Church is holy Christianity, or the collection of all believers under Christ their head, to whom the Holy Ghost through the Gospels and sacraments promises, communicates and administers heavenly salvation;" meaning that the Catholic Church is lost in error, and that the true means of salvation is in Lutheranism.

For Catholics the Church of God coincides with the Roman priesthood and the Pope. For the Greek Orthodox believer the Church of God coincides with the establishment and priesthood of Russia.*

subject to the authority of its lawful pastors, and chief of them our Holy Father, the Pope.

* Homyakov's definition of the Church, which was received with some favour among Russians, does not improve matters, if we are to agree with Homyakov in consider-

For Lutherans the Church of God coincides with a body of men who recognise the authority of the Bible and Luther's Catechism.

Ordinarily, when speaking of the rise of Christianity, men belonging to one of the existing Churches use the word church in the singular, as though there were and had been only one Church. But this is absolutely incorrect. The Church, as an institution which asserted that it possessed infallible truth, did not make its appearance singly; there were at least two Churches directly this claim was made.

ing the Greek Orthodox Church as the one true Church. Homyakov asserts that a Church is a collection of men (all without distinction of clergy and laymen) united together by love, and that only to men united by love is the truth revealed (let us love each other, that in the unity of thought, &c.), and that such a Church is the Church which, in the first place, recognises the Nicene Creed, and in the second place does not, after the division of the Churches, recognise the popes and new dogmas. But with such a definition of the Church, there is still more difficulty in reconciling, as Homyakov tries to do, the Church united by love with the Church that recognises the Nicene Creed and the doctrine of Photius. So that Homyakov's assertion that this Church, united by love, and consequently holy, is the same Church as the Greek Orthodox priesthood profess faith in, is even more arbitrary than the assertions of the Catholics or the Orthodox. If we admit the idea of a Church in the sense Homyakov gives to it—that is, a body of men bound together by love and truth—then all that any man can predicate in regard to this body, if such an one exists, is its love and truth, but there can be no outer signs by which one could reckon oneself or another as a member of this holy body, nor by which one could put any one outside it; so that no institution having an external existence can correspond to this idea.

While believers were agreed among themselves and the body was one, it had no need to declare itself as a Church. It was only when believers were split up into opposing parties, renouncing one another, that it seemed necessary to each party to confirm their own truth by ascribing to themselves infallibility. The conception of one Church only arose when there were two sides divided and disputing, who each called the other side heresy, and recognised their own side only as the infallible Church.

If we knew that there was a Church which decided in the year 51 to receive the uncircumcised, it is only so because there was another Church—of the Judaists—who decided to keep the uncircumcised out.

If there is a Catholic Church now which asserts its own infallibility, that is only because there are Churches—Greco-Russian, Old Orthodox, and Lutheran—each asserting their own infallibility and denying that of all other Churches. So that the one Church is only a fantastic imagination which has not the least trace of reality about it.

As a real historical fact there has existed, and still exist, several bodies of men, each asserting that it is the one Church, founded by Christ, and that all the others who call themselves Churches are only sects and heresies.

The Catechisms of the Churches of the

most world-wide influence—the Catholic, the Old Orthodox, and the Lutheran—openly assert this.

In the Catholic Catechism it is said: “Quels sont ceux qui sont hors de l'église? Les infidèles, les hérétiques, les schismatiques.”* The so-called Greek Orthodox are regarded as schismatics, the Lutherans as heretics; so that according to the Catholic Catechism the only people in the Church are Catholics.

In the so-called Orthodox Catechism it is said: “By the one Christian Church is understood the Orthodox, which remains fully in accord with the Universal Church.” As for the Roman Church and other sects (the Lutherans and the rest they do not even dignify by the name of Church), they cannot be included in the one true Church, since they have themselves separated from it.

According to this definition, the Catholics and Lutherans are outside the Church, and there are only Orthodox in the Church.

The Lutheran Catechism says: “Die wahre Kirche wird darein erkannt, dass in ihr das Wort Gottes lauter und rein ohne Menschenzusätze gelehrt und die Sacramente treu nach Christi Einsetzung gewahret werden.”†

According to this definition, all those who

* Who are those who are outside the Church? Infidels, heretics, and schismatics.

† The true Church will be known by the Word of God being studied clear and unmixed with man's additions, and the sacraments being maintained faithful to Christ's teaching.

have added anything to the teaching of Christ and the Apostles, as the Catholic and Greek Churches have done, are outside the Church. And in the Church there are only Protestants.

The Catholics assert that the Holy Ghost has been transmitted without a break in their priesthood. The Orthodox assert that the same Holy Ghost has been transmitted without a break in their priesthood. The Arians asserted that the Holy Ghost was transmitted in their priesthood (they asserted this with just as much right as the Churches in authority now). The Protestants of every kind—Lutherans, Reformed Church, Presbyterians, Methodists, Swedenborgians, Mormons—assert that the Holy Ghost is only present in their communities. If the Catholics assert that the Holy Ghost, at the time of the division of the Church into Arian and Greek, left the Church that fell away and remained in the one true Church, with precisely the same right the Protestants of every denomination can assert that at the time of the separation of their Church from the Catholic the Holy Ghost left the Catholic and passed into the Church they professed. And this is just what they do.

Every Church traces its creed through an uninterrupted transmission from Christ and the Apostles. And truly every Christian creed that has been derived from Christ

must have come down to the present generation through a certain transmission. But that does not prove that it alone of all that has been transmitted, excluding all the rest, can be the sole truth, admitting of no doubt.

Every branch in a tree comes from the root in unbroken connection; but the fact that each branch comes from the one root, does not prove at all that each branch was the only one. It is precisely the same with the Church. Every Church presents exactly the same proofs of the succession, and even the same miracles, in support of its authenticity as every other. So that there is but one strict and exact definition of what is a Church (not of something fantastic which we would wish it to be, but of what it is and has been in reality)—a Church is a body of men who claim for themselves that they are in complete and sole possession of the truth. And these bodies, having in course of time, aided by the support of the temporal authorities, developed into powerful institutions, have been the principal obstacles to the diffusion of a true comprehension of the teaching of Christ.

It could not be otherwise. The chief peculiarity which distinguished Christ's teaching from previous religions consisted in the fact that those who accepted it, strove ever more and more to comprehend and realise its teaching. But the Church doctrine asserted

its own complete and final comprehension and realisation of it.

Strange though it may seem to us who have been brought up in the erroneous view of the Church as a Christian institution, and in contempt for heresy, yet the fact is that only in what was called heresy was there any true movement, that is, true Christianity, and that it only ceased to be so when those heresies stopped short in their movement and also petrified into the fixed forms of a Church.

And, indeed, what is a heresy? Read all the theological works one after another. In all of them heresy is the subject which first presents itself for definition; since every theological work deals with the true doctrine of Christ as distinguished from the erroneous doctrines which surround it, that is, heresies. Yet you will not find anywhere anything like a definition of heresy.

The treatment of this subject by the learned historian of Christianity, E. de Pressensé, in his "Histoire du Dogme" (Paris, 1869), under the heading "Ubi Christus, ibi Ecclesia," may serve as an illustration of the complete absence of anything like a definition of what is understood by the word heresy. Here is what he says in his introduction (p. 3): "Je sais que l'on nous conteste le droit de qualifier ainsi (that is, to call heresies) les tendances qui furent si vivement

combattues par les premiers Pères. La désignation même d'hérésie semble une atteinte portée à la liberté de conscience et de pensée. Nous ne pouvons partager ce scrupule, car il n'irait à rien moins qu'à enlever au Christianisme tout caractère distinctif."*

And though he tells us that after Constantine's time the Church did actually abuse its power by designating those who dissented from it as heretics and persecuting them, yet he says, when treating of early times : " L'église est une libre association ; il y a tout profit à se séparer d'elle. La polémique contre l'erreur n'a d'autres ressources que la pensée et le sentiment. Un type doctrinal uniforme n'a pas encore été élaboré ; les divergences secondaires se produisent en Orient et en Occident avec une entière liberté ; la théologie n'est point liée à d'invariables formules. Si au sein de cette diversité apparaît un fonds commun de croyances, n'est-on pas en droit d'y voir non pas un système formulé et composé par les représentants d'une autorité d'école, mais la foi elle-même dans son instinct le plus sûr et sa manifestation la plus spontanée ? Si cette

* I know that our right to qualify thus the tendencies, which were so actively opposed by the early Fathers, is contested. The very use of the word heresy seems an attack upon liberty of conscience and thought. We cannot share this scruple ; for it would amount to nothing less than depriving Christianity of all distinctive character.

même unanimité qui se révèle dans les croyances essentielles, se retrouve pour repousser telles ou telles tendances, ne serons-nous pas en droit de conclure que ces tendances étaient en désaccord flagrant avec les principes fondamentaux du christianisme ? Cette présomption ne se transformera-t-elle pas en certitude si nous reconnaissions dans la doctrine universellement repoussée par l'Eglise les traits caractéristiques de l'une des religions du passé ? Pour dire que le gnosticisme ou l'ébionitisme sont les formes légitimes de la pensée chrétienne il faut dire hardiment qu'il n'y a pas de pensée chrétienne, ni de caractère spécifique qui la fasse reconnaître. Sous prétexte de l'élargir, on la dissout. Personne au temps de Platon n'eût osé couvrir de son nom une doctrine qui n'eut pas fait place à la théorie des idées ; et l'on eût excité les justes moqueries de la Grèce, en voulant faire d'Epicure ou de Zénon un disciple de l'Académie. Reconnaissions donc que s'il existe une religion ou une doctrine qui s'appelle christianisme, elle peut avoir ses hérésies." *

* The Church is a free association ; there is much to be gained by separation from it. Conflict with error has no weapons other than thought and feeling. One uniform type of doctrine has not yet been elaborated ; divergences in secondary matters arise freely in East and West ; theology is not wedded to invariable formulas. If in the midst of this diversity a mass of beliefs common to all is apparent, is one not justified in seeing in it, not a formulated system, framed by the representatives of pedantic authority, but

The author's whole argument amounts to this: that every opinion which differs from the code of dogmas we believe in at a given time, is heresy. But of course at any given time and place men always believe in something or other; and this belief in something, indefinite at any place, at some time, cannot be a criterion of truth.

It all amounts to this: since *ubi Christus ibi Ecclesia*, then Christus is where we are.

Every so-called heresy, regarding, as it does, its own creed as the truth, can just as easily find in Church history a series of illustrations of its own creed, can use all Pressensé's arguments on its own behalf, and can call its own creed the one truly Christian creed. And that is just what all heresies do and have always done.

faith itself in its surest instinct and its most spontaneous manifestation? If the same unanimity which is revealed in essential points of belief is found also in rejecting certain tendencies, are we not justified in concluding that these tendencies were in flagrant opposition to the fundamental principles of Christianity? And will not this presumption be transformed into certainty if we recognise in the doctrine universally rejected by the Church the characteristic features of one of the religions of the past? To say that gnosticism or ebionitism are legitimate forms of Christian thought, one must boldly deny the existence of Christian thought at all, or any specific character by which it could be recognised. No one in the time of Plato would have ventured to give his name to a doctrine in which the theory of ideas had no place, and one would deservedly have excited the ridicule of Greece by trying to pass off Epicurus or Zeno as a disciple of the Academy. Let us recognise, then, that if a religion or a doctrine exists which is called Christianity, it may have its heresies.

The only definition of heresy (the word *aīp̄es̄is̄*, means a part) is this: the name given by a body of men to any opinion which rejects a part of the creed professed by that body. The more frequent meaning, more often ascribed to the word heresy, is—that of an opinion which rejects the Church doctrine founded and supported by the temporal authorities.

There is a remarkable and voluminous work, very little known, "Unpartheyische Kirchen- und Ketzer-Historie," 1729, by Gottfried Arnold, which deals with precisely this subject, and points out all the unlawfulness, the arbitrariness, the senselessness, and the cruelty of using the word heretic in the sense of reprobate. This book is an attempt to write the history of Christianity in the form of a history of heresy.

In the introduction the author propounds a series of questions: (1) Of those who make heretics; (2) Of those whom they made heretics; (3) Of heretical subjects themselves; (4) Of the method of making heretics; and (5) Of the object and result of making heretics.

On each of these points he propounds ten more questions, the answers to which he gives later on from the works of well-known theologians. But he leaves the reader to draw for himself the principal conclusion from the expositions in the whole book. As

examples of these questions, in which the answers are to some extent included also, I will quote the following. Under the 4th head, of the manner in which heretics are made, he says, in one of the questions (in the 7th):

“ Does not all history show that the greatest makers of heretics and masters of that craft were just these wise men, from whom the Father hid his secrets, that is, the hypocrites, the Pharisees, and lawyers, men utterly godless and perverted (Question 20-21). And in the corrupt times of Christianity were not these very men cast out, denounced by the hypocrites and envious, who were endowed by God with great gifts, and who would in the days of pure Christianity have been held in high honour? And, on the other hand, would not the men who, in the decline of Christianity, raised themselves above all, and regarded themselves as the teachers of the purest Christianity, would not these very men, in the times of the apostles and disciples of Christ, have been regarded as the most shameless heretics and anti-Christians? ”

He expounds, among other things, in these questions, the theory that any verbal expression of faith, such as was demanded by the Church, and the departure from which was reckoned as heresy, could never fully cover the exact religious ideas of a believer, and that therefore the demand for an

expression of faith in certain words was ever productive of heresy, and he says, in Question 21:

“And if heavenly things and thoughts present themselves to a man’s mind as so great and so profound that he does not find corresponding words to express them, ought one to call him a heretic, because he cannot express his idea with perfect exactness?” And in Question 33:

“And is not the fact that there was no heresy in the earliest days due to the fact that the Christians did not judge one another by verbal expressions, but by deed and by heart, since they had perfect liberty to express their ideas without the dread of being called heretics; was it not the easiest and most ordinary ecclesiastical proceeding, if the clergy wanted to get rid of or to ruin any one, for them to cast suspicion on the person’s belief, and to throw a cloak of heresy upon him, and by this means to procure his condemnation and removal?”

“True though it may be that there were sins and errors among the so-called heretics, it is no less true and evident,” he says farther on, “from the innumerable examples quoted here (*i.e.* in the history of the Church and of heresy), that there was not a single sincere and conscientious man of any importance whom the Churchmen would not from envy or other causes have ruined.”

Thus almost 200 years ago the real meaning of heresy was understood. And notwithstanding that, the same conception of it has gone on existing up to now! And it cannot fail to exist so long as the conception of a Church exists. Heresy is the obverse side of the Church. Wherever there is a Church, there must be the conception of heresy. A Church is a body of men who assert that they are in possession of infallible truth. Heresy is the opinion of the men who do not admit the infallibility of the Church's truth.

Heresy makes its appearance in the Church. It is the effort to break through the petrified authority of the Church. All effort after a living comprehension of the doctrine has been made by heretics. Tertullian, Origen, Augustine, Luther, Huss, Savonarola, Helchitsky, and the rest were heretics. It could not be otherwise.

The follower of Christ, whose service means an ever-growing understanding of His teaching, and an ever-closer fulfilment of it, in progress towards perfection, cannot, just because he is a follower of Christ, claim for himself or any other that he understands Christ's teaching fully and fulfils it. Still less can he claim this for any body of men.

To whatever degree of understanding and perfection the follower of Christ may have attained, he always feels the insufficiency of his understanding and fulfilment of it, and is

always striving towards a fuller understanding and fulfilment. And therefore to assert of oneself or of any body of men, that one is or they are in possession of perfect understanding and fulfilment of Christ's word, is to renounce the very spirit of Christ's teaching.

Strange as it may seem, the Churches as churches have always been, and cannot but be, institutions not only alien in spirit to Christ's teaching, but even directly antagonistic to it. With good reason Voltaire calls the church *l'infâme*; with good reason have all or almost all so-called sects of Christians recognised the Church as the scarlet woman foretold in the Apocalypse; with good reasons is the history of the Church the history of the greatest cruelties and horrors.

The Churches as churches are not, as many people suppose, institutions which have Christian principles for their basis, even though they may have strayed a little away from the straight path. The Churches as churches, as bodies which assert their own infallibility, are institutions opposed to Christianity. There is not only nothing in common between the Churches as such and Christianity, except the name, but they represent two principles fundamentally opposed and antagonistic to one another. One represents pride, violence, self-assertion, stagnation, and death; the other, meekness, penitence, humility, progress, and life.

We cannot serve these two masters, we have to choose between them.

The servants of the Churches of all denominations, especially of later times, try to show themselves champions of progress in Christianity. They make concessions, wish to correct the abuses that have slipped into the Church, and maintain that one cannot, on account of these abuses, deny the principle itself of a Christian Church, which alone can bind all men together in unity, and be a mediator between men and God. But this is all mistaken. Not only have the Churches never bound men together in unity; they have always been one of the principal causes of division between men, of their hatred of one another, of wars, battles, inquisitions, massacres of St. Bartholomew, and so on. And the Churches have never served as mediators between men and God. Such mediation is not wanted, and was directly forbidden by Christ, who has revealed His teaching directly and immediately to each man. But the Churches set up dead forms in the place of God, and far from revealing God, they obscure Him from men's sight. The Churches, which originated from misunderstanding of Christ's teaching and have maintained this misunderstanding by their immovability, cannot but persecute and refuse to recognise all true understanding of Christ's words. They try to conceal this,

but in vain ; for every step forward along the path pointed out for us by Christ is a step towards their destruction.

To hear and to read the sermons and articles in which Church writers of later times of all denominations speak of Christian truths and virtues ; to hear or read these skilful arguments that have been elaborated during centuries, and exhortations and professions, which sometimes seem like sincere professions, one is ready to doubt whether the Churches can be antagonistic to Christianity. "It cannot be," one says, "that these people who can point to such men as Chrysostom, Fénelon, Butler, and others professing the Christian faith, were antagonistic to Christianity." One is tempted to say, "The Churches may have strayed away from Christianity, they may be in error, but they cannot be hostile to it." But we must look to the fruit to judge the tree, as Christ taught us. And if we see that their fruits were evil, that the results of their activity were antagonistic to Christianity, we cannot but admit that, however good the men were —the work of the Church in which these men took part was not Christian. The goodness and worth of these men who served the Churches was the goodness and worth of the men, and not of the institution they served. All the good men, such as Francis of Assisi, and Francis of Sales, our

Tihon Zadonsky, Thomas à Kempis, and others, were good men in spite of their serving an institution hostile to Christianity, and they would have been still better if they had not been under the influence of the error which they were serving.

But why should we speak of the past and judge from the past, which may have been misrepresented and misunderstood by us? The Churches, with their principles and their practice, are not a thing of the past. The Churches are before us to-day, and we can judge of them to some purpose by their practical activity, their influence on men.

What is the practical work of the Churches to-day? What is their influence upon men? What is done by the Churches among us, among the Catholics and the Protestants of all denominations—what is their practical work? and what are the results of their practical work?

The practice of our Russian so-called Orthodox Church is plain to all. It is an enormous fact which there is no possibility of hiding, and about which there can be no disputing.

What constitutes the practical work of this Russian Church, this immense, intensely active institution, which consists of a regiment of half a million men and costs the people tens of millions of roubles?

The practical business of the Church

consists in instilling by every conceivable means into the mass of one hundred millions of the Russian people, those extinct relics of beliefs for which there is nowadays no kind of justification, "in which scarcely any one now believes, and often not even those whose duty it is to diffuse these false beliefs." To instil into the people the formulas of Byzantine theology, of the Trinity, of the Mother of God, of Sacraments, of Grace, and so on, extinct conceptions, foreign to us, and having no kind of meaning for men of our times, forms only one part of the work of the Russian Church. Another part of its practice consists in the maintenance of idol-worship in the most literal meaning of the word; in the veneration of holy relics, and of ikons, the offering of sacrifices to them, and the expectation of their answers to prayer. I am not going to speak of what is preached and what is written by clergy of scientific or liberal tendencies in the theological journals. I am going to speak of what is actually done by the clergy through the wide expanse of the Russian land among a people of one hundred millions. What do they, diligently, assiduously, everywhere alike, without intermission, teach the people? What do they demand from the people in virtue of their (so-called) Christian faith?

I will begin from the beginning with the birth of a child. At the birth of a child they

teach them that they must recite a prayer over the child and mother to purify them, as though without this prayer the mother of a new-born child were unclean. To do this the priest holds the child in his arms before the images of the saints (called by the people plainly gods) and reads words of exorcising power, and this purifies the mother. Then it is suggested to the parents, and even exacted of them, under fear of punishment for non-fulfilment, that the child must be baptized; that is, be dipped by the priest three times into the water, while certain words, understood by no one, are read aloud, and certain actions, still less understood, are performed; various parts of the body are rubbed with oil, and the hair is cut, while the sponsors blow and spit at an imaginary devil. All this is necessary to purify the child and to make him a Christian. Then it is instilled into the parents that they ought to administer the sacrament to the child, that is, give him, in the guise of bread and wine, a portion of Christ's body to eat, as a result of which the child receives the grace of God within it, and so on. Then it is suggested that the child as it grows up must be taught to pray. To pray means to place himself directly before the wooden boards on which are painted the faces of Christ, the Mother of God and the saints, to bow his head and his whole body, and to touch his forehead, his shoulders and

his stomach with his right hand, holding his fingers in a certain position, and to utter some words in Slavonic, the most usual of which taught to all children are: Mother of God, virgin, rejoice thee, &c. &c.

Then it is instilled into the child as it is brought up that at the sight of any church or ikon he must repeat the same action—*i.e.* cross himself. Then it is instilled into him that on holidays (holidays are the days on which Christ was born, though no one knows when that was, on which He was circumcised, on which the Mother of God died, on which the cross is carried in procession, on which ikons have been set up, on which a lunatic saw a vision, and so on)—on holidays he must dress himself in his best clothes and go to church, and must buy candles and place them there before the images of the saints. Then he must give offerings and prayers for the dead and little loaves to be cut up into three-cornered pieces, and must pray many times for the health and prosperity of the Tsar and the bishops, and for himself and his own affairs, and then kiss the cross and the hand of the priest.

Besides these observances, it is instilled into him that at least once a year he must confess. To confess means to go to the church and to tell the priest his sins, on the theory that this informing a stranger of his sins completely purifies him from them.

And after that he must eat with a little spoon a morsel of bread with wine, which will purify him still more. Next it is instilled into him, that if a man and woman want their physical union to be sanctified, they must go to church, put on metal crowns, drink certain potions, walk three times round a table to the sound of singing, and that then the physical union of a man and woman becomes sacred and altogether different from all other such unions.

Further it is instilled into him in his life that he must observe the following rules: not to eat butter or milk on certain days, and on certain other days to sing Te Deums and requiems for the dead, on holidays to entertain the priest and give him money, and several times in the year to bring the ikons from the church, and to carry them slung on his shoulders through the fields and houses. It is instilled into him that on his deathbed a man must not fail to eat bread and wine with a spoon, and that it will be still better if he has time to be rubbed with sacred oil. This will guarantee his welfare in the future life. After his death it is instilled into his relatives, that it is a good thing for the salvation of the dead man to place a printed paper of prayers in his hand; it is a good thing further to read aloud a certain book over the dead body, and to pronounce the dead man's name in church at a certain

time. All this is regarded as faith obligatory on every one.

But if any one wants to take particular care of his soul, then according to this faith he is instructed that the greatest security of the salvation of the soul in the world is attained by offering money to the churches and monasteries, and engaging the holy men by this means to pray for him. Entering monasteries too, and kissing relics and miraculous ikons, are further means of salvation for the soul.

According to this faith ikons and relics communicate a special sanctity, power, and grace; and even proximity to these objects, touching them, kissing them, putting candles before them, crawling under them whilst they are being carried along, are all efficacious for salvation, as well as Te Deums repeated before these holy things.

So this, and nothing else, is the faith called Orthodox, that is the actual faith which, under the guise of Christianity, has been with all the forces of the Church, and is now with especial zeal, instilled into the people.

And let no one say that the Orthodox teachers place the essential part of their teaching in something else, and that all these are only ancient forms, which it is not thought necessary to do away with. That is false. This, and nothing but this, is the faith taught through the whole of Russia by the

whole of the Russian clergy, and of late years with especial zeal. There is nothing else taught. Something different may be talked of and written of in the capitals; but among the hundred millions of the people this is what is done, this is what is taught, and nothing more. Churchmen may talk of something else, but this is what they teach by every means in their power.

All this, and the worship of relics and of ikons, has been introduced into works of theology and into the catechisms. Thus they teach the people it in theory and in practice, using every resource of authority, solemnity, pomp, and violence to impress them. They compel the people, by overawing them, to believe in this, and jealously guard this faith from any attempt to free the people from these barbarous superstitions.

As I said when I published my book, Christ's teaching and His very words about non-resistance to evil were for many years a subject for ridicule and low jesting in my eyes, and Churchmen, far from opposing it, even encouraged this scoffing at sacred things. But try the experiment of saying a disrespectful word about a hideous idol which is carried sacrilegiously about Moscow by drunken men under the name of ikon of the Iversky virgin, and you will raise a groan of indignation from these same Churchmen. All that they preach is an external

observance of the rites of idolatry. And let it not be said that the one does not hinder the other, that "these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone." "All, therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works; for they say, and do not" (Matt. xxiii. 3).

This was spoken of the Pharisees, who fulfilled all the external observances prescribed by the law, and therefore the words "whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do," refer to works of mercy and goodness, and the words "do not ye after their works. for they say, and do not," refer to their observance of ceremonies and their neglect of good works, and have exactly the opposite meaning to that which the Churchmen try to give to the passage, interpreting it as an injunction to observe ceremonies. External observances and the service of truth and goodness are for the most part difficult to combine; the one excludes the other. So it was with the Pharisees, so it is now with Church Christians.

If a man can be saved by the redemption, by sacraments, and by prayer, then he does not need good works.

The Sermon on the Mount, or the Creed. One cannot believe in both. And Churchmen have chosen the latter. The Creed is taught and is read as a prayer in the

churches, but the Sermon on the Mount is excluded even from the Gospel passages read in the churches, so that the congregation never hears it in church, except on those days when the whole of the Gospel is read. Indeed, it could not be otherwise. People who believe in a wicked and senseless God—who has cursed the human race and devoted his own Son to sacrifice, and a part of mankind to eternal torment—cannot believe in the God of love. The man who believes in a God—in a Christ coming again in glory to judge and to punish the quick and the dead, cannot believe in the Christ who bade us turn the left cheek, judge not, forgive those that wrong us, and love our enemies. The man who believes in the inspiration of the Old Testament and the sacred character of David, who commanded on his deathbed the murder of an old man who had cursed him, and whom he could not kill himself because he was bound by an oath to him, and the similar atrocities of which the Old Testament is full, cannot believe in the holy love of Christ. The man who believes in the Church's doctrine of the compatibility of warfare and capital punishment with Christianity cannot believe in the brotherhood of all men.

And what is most important of all—the man who believes in salvation through faith in the redemption or the sacraments, cannot

devote all his powers to realizing Christ's moral teaching in his life.

The man who has been instructed by the Church in the profane doctrine that a man cannot be saved by his own powers, but that there is another means of salvation, will infallibly rely upon this means and not on his own powers, which, they assure him, it is sinful to trust in.

The teaching of every Church, with its redemption and sacraments, excludes the teaching of Christ; most of all the teaching of the Orthodox Church with its idolatrous observances.

"But the people have always believed of their own accord as they believe now," will be said in answer to this. "The whole history of the Russian people proves it. One cannot deprive the people of their traditions." This statement, too, is misleading. The people did certainly at one time believe in something like what the Church believes in now, though it was far from being the same thing. In spite of their superstitious regard for ikons, house-spirits, relics, and festivals with wreaths of birch-leaves, there has still always been in the people a profound moral and living understanding of Christianity, which there has never been in the Church, as a whole, and which is only met with in its best representatives. But the people, notwithstanding all the prejudices in-

stilled into them by the government and the Church, have in their best representatives long outgrown that crude stage of understanding, a fact which is proved by the springing up everywhere of the rationalist sects with which Russia is swarming to-day, and on which Churchmen are now carrying on an ineffectual warfare. The people are advancing to a consciousness of the moral, living side of Christianity. And then the Church comes forward, not borrowing from the people, but zealously instilling into them the petrified formalities of an extinct paganism, and striving to thrust them back again into the darkness from which they are emerging with such effort.

"We teach the people nothing new, nothing but what they believe, only in a more perfect form," say the Churchmen. This is just what the man did who tied up the full-grown chicken and thrust it back into the shell it had come out of.

I have often been irritated, though it would be comic if the consequences were not so awful, by observing how men shut one another in a delusion and cannot get out of this magic circle.

The first question, the first doubt of a Russian who is beginning to think, is a question about the ikons, and still more the miraculous relics: is it true that they are genuine, and that miracles are worked through them? Hundreds of thousands of men put

this question to themselves, and their principal difficulty in answering it is the fact that bishops, metropolitans, and all men in positions of authority kiss the relics and wonder-working ikons. Ask the bishops and men in positions of authority why they do so, and they will say they do it for the sake of the people, while the people kiss them because the bishops and men in authority do so.

In spite of all the external varnish of modernity, learning, and spirituality which the members of the Church begin nowadays to assume in their works, their articles, their theological journals, and their sermons, the practical work of the Russian Church consists of nothing more than keeping the people in their present condition of coarse and savage idolatry, and, worse still, strengthening and diffusing superstition and religious ignorance, and suppressing that living understanding of Christianity which exists in the people side by side with idolatry.

I remember once being present in the monks' bookshop of the Optchy Hermitage while an old peasant was choosing books for his grandson who could read. A monk pressed on him accounts of relics, holidays, miraculous ikons, a psalter, &c. I asked the old man, "Has he the Gospel?" "No." "Give him the Gospel in Russian," I said to the monk. "That will not do for him," answered

the monk. There you have an epitome of the work of our Church.

But this is only in barbarous Russia, the European and American reader will observe. And such an observation is just, but only so far as it refers to the government which aids the Church in its task of stultification and corruption in Russia.

It is true that there is nowhere in Europe a government so despotic and so closely allied with the ruling Church. And therefore the share of the temporal power in the corruption of the people is greatest in Russia. But it is untrue that the Russian Church in its influence on the people is in any respect different from any other Church.

The Churches are everywhere the same, and if the Catholic, the Anglican, or the Lutheran Church has not at hand a government as compliant as the Russian, it is not due to any indisposition to profit by such a government.

The Church as a church, whatever it may may be—Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, Presbyterian—every Church, in so far as it is a church, cannot but strive for the same object as the Russian Church. That object is to conceal the real meaning of Christ's teaching and to replace it by their own, which lays no obligation on them, excludes the possibility of understanding the true teaching of Christ, and, what is the chief consideration,

justifies the existence of priests supported at the people's expense.

What else has Catholicism done, what else is it doing in its prohibition of reading the Gospel, and in its demand for unreasoning submission to Church authorities and to an infallible Pope? Is the religion of Catholicism any other than that of the Russian Church? There is the same external ritual, the same relics, miracles, and wonder-working images of Notre Dame, and the same processions. The same loftily vague discussions of Christianity in books and sermons, and when it comes to practice, the same supporting of the present idolatry. And is not the same thing done in Anglicanism, Lutheranism, and every denomination of Protestantism which has been formed into a Church? There is the same duty laid on their congregations to believe in the dogmas, expressed in the fourth century, which have lost all meaning for men of our times, and the same duty of idolatrous worship, if not of relics and ikons, then of the Sabbath-day and the letter of the Bible. There is always the same activity directed to concealing the real duties of Christianity and to putting in their place an external respectability and cant, as it is so well described by the English who are peculiarly oppressed by it. In Protestantism, this tendency is specially remarkable because it has not the excuse of antiquity. And does

not exactly the same thing show itself even in contemporary revivalism—the revived Calvinism and Evangelicalism, to which the Salvation Army owes its origin?

So uniform is the attitude of all the Churches to the teaching of Christ, whose name they assume for their own advantage.

The inconsistency of all Church forms of religion with the teaching of Christ is, of course, the reason why special efforts are necessary to conceal this inconsistency from the people. Truly, we need only imagine ourselves in the position of any grown-up man, not necessarily educated, even the simplest man of the present day, who has picked up the ideas that are everywhere in the air nowadays, of geology, physics, chemistry, cosmography, or history, when he, for the first time, consciously compares them with the articles of belief instilled into him in childhood, and maintained by the Churches—that God created the world in six days, and light before the sun, that Noah shut up all the animals in his ark, and so on; that Jesus is also God the Son, who created all before time was; that this God came down upon earth to atone for Adam's sin; that He rose again, ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father, and will come in the clouds to judge the world, and so on. All these propositions, elaborated by men of the fourth century, had a certain meaning for

men of that time, but for men of to-day they have no meaning whatever. Men of the present day can repeat these words with their lips, but believe them they cannot. For such sentences, as that God lives in heaven, that the heavens opened and a voice from somewhere said something ; that Christ rose again, and ascended somewhere in heaven, and again will come from somewhere on the clouds and so on, have no meaning for us.

A man who regarded the heavens as a solid, finite vault, could believe or disbelieve that God created the heavens, that the heavens opened, that Christ ascended into heaven, but for us all these phrases have no sense whatever. Men of the present can only believe, as indeed they do, that they ought to believe in this ; but believe it they cannot, because it has no meaning for them.

Even if all these phrases ought to be interpreted in a figurative sense and are allegories, we know that in the first place all Churchmen are not agreed about it, but on the contrary the majority stick to understanding the Holy Scripture in its literal sense; and, secondly, that these allegorical interpretations are very varied and are not supported by any evidence.

But even if a man wants to force himself to believe in the doctrines of the Church just as they are taught to him, the universal diffusion of education and of the Gospel and

of communication between people of different forms of religion, presents a still more insurmountable obstacle to his doing so.

A man of the present day need only buy a Gospel for three copecks and read through the plain words, admitting of no misinterpretation, that Christ said to the Samaritan woman, "that the Father seeketh not worshippers at Jerusalem, nor in this mountain nor in that, but worshippers in spirit and in truth;" or the saying that "the Christian must not pray like the heathen, nor for show, but secretly, that is in his closet;" or that Christ's follower must call no man master or father. He need only read these words to be thoroughly convinced that the Church pastors, who call themselves teachers in opposition to Christ's precept, and dispute among themselves, constitute no kind of authority, and that what the Churchmen teach us is not Christianity. Less even than that is necessary. Even if a man nowadays did continue to believe in miracles and did not read the Gospel, mere association with people of different forms of religion and faith, which happens so easily in these days, compels him to doubt of the truth of his own faith. It was all very well when a man did not see men of any other form of religion than his own, he believed that his form of religion was the one true one. But a thinking man has only to come into contact—as constantly

happens in these days—with people, equally good and bad of different denominations, who condemn each other's beliefs, to doubt of the truth of the belief he professes himself. In these days only a man who is absolutely ignorant or absolutely indifferent to the vital questions with which religion deals, can remain in the faith of the Church.

What deceptions and what strenuous efforts the Churches must employ to continue, in spite of all these tendencies subversive of the faith, to build churches, to perform masses, to preach, to teach, to convert, and, most of all, to receive for it all immense emoluments, as do all these priests, pastors, incumbents, superintendents, abbots, archdeacons, bishops, and archbishops. They need special supernatural efforts. And the Churches do, with ever-increasing intensity and zeal, make such efforts. With us in Russia, besides other means, they employ simple brute force, as there the temporal power is willing to obey the Church. Men who refuse an external assent to the faith and say so openly, are either directly punished or deprived of their rights; men who strictly keep the external forms of religion are rewarded and given privileges.

That is how the Orthodox clergy proceed; but indeed all Churches without exception avail themselves of every means for the

purpose—one of the most important of which is what is now called hypnotism.

Every art, from architecture to poetry, is brought into requisition to work its effect on men's souls and to reduce them to a state of stupefaction, and this effect is constantly produced. This use of hypnotising influence on men to bring them to a state of stupefaction is especially apparent in the proceedings of the Salvation Army, who employ new practices to which we are unaccustomed: trumpets, drums, songs, flags, costumes, marching, dancing, tears, and dramatic performances.

But this only displeases us because these are new practices; were not the old practices in churches essentially the same, with their special lighting, gold, splendour, candles, choirs, organ, bells, vestments, intoning, &c.?

But however powerful this hypnotic influence may be, it is not the chief nor the most pernicious activity of the Church. The chief and most pernicious work of the Church is that which is directed to the deception of children—these very children of whom Christ said, “Woe to him that offendeth one of these little ones.” From the very first awakening of the consciousness of the child they begin to deceive him, to instil into him with the utmost solemnity what they do not themselves believe in, and they continue to instil it into

him till the deception has by habit grown into the child's nature. They studiously deceive the child on the most important subject in life, and when the deception has so grown into his life that it would be difficult to uproot it, then they reveal to him the whole world of science and reality, which cannot by any means be reconciled with the beliefs that have been instilled into him, leaving it to him to find his way as best he can out of these contradictions.

If one set oneself the task of trying to confuse a man so that he could not think clearly, nor free himself from the perplexity of two opposing theories of life which had been instilled into him from childhood, one could not invent any means more effectual than the treatment of every young man educated in our so-called Christian society.

It is terrible to think what the Churches do to men. But if one imagines oneself in the position of the men who constitute the Church, we see they could not act differently. The Churches are placed in a dilemma: the Sermon on the Mount or the Nicene Creed—the one excludes the other. If a man sincerely believes in the Sermon on the Mount, the Nicene Creed must inevitably lose all meaning and significance for him, and the Church and its representatives together with it. If a man believes in the Nicene Creed, that is in the

Church, that is in those who call themselves its representatives, the Sermon on the Mount becomes superfluous for him. And therefore the Churches cannot but make every possible effort to obscure the meaning of the Sermon on the Mount and to attract men to themselves. It is only due to the intense zeal of the Churches in this direction that the influence of the Churches has lasted hitherto.

Let the Church stop its work of hypnotising the masses, and deceiving children even for the briefest interval of time, and men would begin to understand Christ's teaching. But this understanding will be the end of the Churches and all their influence. And therefore the Churches will not for an instant relax their zeal in the business of hypnotising grown-up people and deceiving children. This, then, is the work of the Churches: to instil a false interpretation of Christ's teaching into men, and to prevent a true interpretation of it for the majority of so-called believers.

CHAPTER IV

CHRISTIANITY MISUNDERSTOOD BY MEN OF SCIENCE

Attitude of men of science to religions in general—What religion is, and what is its significance for the life of humanity—Three conceptions of life—Christian religion the expression of the divine conception of life—Misinterpretation of Christianity by men of science, who study it in its external manifestations due to their criticising it from standpoint of social conception of life—Opinion, resulting from this misinterpretation, that Christ's moral teaching is exaggerated and cannot be put into practice—Expression of divine conception of life in the Gospel—False ideas of men of science on Christianity proceed from their conviction that they have an infallible method of criticism—From which come two misconceptions in regard to Christian doctrine—First misconception, that the teaching cannot be put into practice, due to the Christian religion directing life in a way different from that of the social theory of life—Christianity holds up ideal, does not lay down rules—To the animal force of man Christ adds the consciousness of a divine force—Christianity seems to destroy possibility of life only when the ideal held up is mistaken for rule—Ideal must not be lowered—Life, according to Christ's teaching, is movement—The ideal and the precepts—Second misconception shown in replacing love and service of God by love and service of humanity—Men of science imagine their doctrine of service of humanity and Christianity are identical—Doctrine of service of humanity based on social conception of life—Love for humanity, logically deduced from love of self, has no meaning because humanity is a fiction—Christian love deduced from love of God, finds its object in the whole world,

not in humanity alone—Christianity teaches man to live in accordance with His divine nature—It shows that the essence of the soul of man is love, and that his happiness ensues from love of God, whom he recognises as love within himself.

Now I will speak of the other view of Christianity which hinders the true understanding of it—the scientific view.

Churchmen substitute for Christianity the version they have framed of it for themselves, and this view of Christianity they regard as the one infallibly true one.

Men of science regard as Christianity only the tenets held by the different Churches in the past and present; and finding that these tenets have lost all the significance of Christianity, they accept it as a religion which has outlived its age.

To see clearly how impossible it is to understand the Christian teaching from such a point of view, one must form for oneself an idea of the place actually held by religions in general, by the Christian religion in particular, in the life of mankind, and of the significance attributed to them by science.

Just as the individual man cannot live without having some theory of the meaning of his life, and is always, though often unconsciously, framing his conduct in accordance with the meaning he attributes to his life, so too associations of men living in similar conditions—nations—cannot but have theories of the meaning of their associated life and

conduct ensuing from those theories. And as the individual man, when he attains a fresh stage of growth, inevitably changes his philosophy of life, and the grown-up man sees a different meaning in it from the child, so too associations of men—nations—are bound to change their philosophy of life and the conduct ensuing from their philosophy, to correspond with their development.

The difference, as regards this, between the individual man and humanity as a whole, lies in the fact that the individual, in forming the view of life proper to the new period of life on which he is entering and the conduct resulting from it, benefits by the experience of men who have lived before him, who have already passed through the stage of growth upon which he is entering. But humanity cannot have this aid, because it is always moving along a hitherto untrodden track, and has no one to ask how to understand life, and to act in the conditions on which it is entering and through which no one has ever passed before.

Nevertheless, just as a man with wife and children cannot continue to look at life as he looked at it when he was a child, so too in the face of the various changes that are taking place, the greater density of population, the establishment of communication between different peoples, the improvements of the methods of the struggle with Nature, and the

accumulation of knowledge, humanity cannot continue to look at life as of old, and it must frame a new theory of life, from which conduct may follow adapted to the new conditions on which it has entered and is entering.

To meet this need humanity has the special power of producing men who give a new meaning to the whole of human life—a theory of life from which follow new forms of activity quite different from all preceding them. The formation of this philosophy of life appropriate to humanity in the new conditions on which it is entering, and of the practice resulting from it, is what is called religion.

And therefore, in the first place, religion is not, as science imagines, a manifestation which at one time corresponded with the development of humanity, but is afterwards outgrown by it. It is a manifestation always inherent in the life of humanity, and is as indispensable, as inherent in humanity at the present time as at any other. Secondly, religion is always the theory of the practice of the future and not of the past, and therefore it is clear that investigation of past manifestations cannot in any case grasp the essence of religion.

The essence of every religious teaching lies not in the desire for a symbolic expression of the forces of Nature, nor in the dread of these forces, nor in the craving for

the marvellous, nor in the external forms in which it is manifested, as men of science imagine. The essence of religion lies in the faculty of men of foreseeing and pointing out the path of life along which humanity must move in the discovery of a new theory of life, as a result of which the whole future conduct of humanity is changed and different from all that has been before.

This faculty of foreseeing the path along which humanity must move, is common in a greater or less degree to all men. But in all times there have been men in whom this faculty was especially strong, and these men have given clear and definite expression to what all men felt vaguely, and formed a new philosophy of life from which new lines of action followed for hundreds and thousands of years.

Of such philosophies of life we know three; two have already been passed through by humanity, and the third is that we are passing through now in Christianity. These philosophies of life are three in number, and only three, not because we have arbitrarily brought the various theories of life together under these three heads, but because all men's actions are always based on one of these three views of life—because we cannot view life otherwise than in these three ways.

These three views of life are as follow:

First, embracing the individual, or the animal view of life; second, embracing the society, or the pagan view of life; third, embracing the whole world, or the divine view of life.

In the first theory of life a man's life is limited to his one individuality; the aim of life is the satisfaction of the will of this individuality. In the second theory of life a man's life is limited not to his own individuality, but to certain societies and classes of individuals: to the tribe, the family, the clan, the nation; the aim of life is limited to the satisfaction of the will of those associations of individuals. In the third theory of life a man's life is limited not to societies and classes of individuals, but extends to the principle and source of life—to God.

These three conceptions of life form the foundation of all the religions that exist or have existed.

The savage recognises life only in himself and his personal desires. His interest in life is concentrated on himself alone. The highest happiness for him is the fullest satisfaction of his desires. The motive power of his life is personal enjoyment. His religion consists in propitiating his deity and in worshipping his gods, whom he imagines as persons living only for their personal aims.

The civilised pagan recognises life not

in himself alone, but in societies of men—in the tribe, the clan, the family, the kingdom—and sacrifices his personal good for these societies. The motive power of his life is glory. His religion consists in the exaltation of the glory of those who are allied to him; the founders of his family, his ancestors, his rulers, and in worshipping gods who are exclusively protectors of his clan, his family, his nation, his government.*

The man who holds the divine theory of life recognises life not in his own individuality, and not in societies of individualities (in the family, the clan, the nation, the tribe, or the government), but in the eternal undying source of life—in God; and to fulfil the will of God he is ready to sacrifice his individual and family and social welfare. The motor power of his life is love. And his religion is the worship in deed and in truth of the principle of the whole—God.

The whole historic existence of mankind is nothing else than the gradual transition from the personal, animal conception of life to the social conception of life, and from the social

* The fact that so many varied forms of existence, as the life of the family, of the tribe, of the clan, of the state, and even the life of humanity theoretically conceived by the Positivists, are founded on this social or pagan theory of life, does not destroy the unity of this theory of life. All these varied forms of life are founded on the same conception, that the life of the individual is not a sufficient aim of life—that the meaning of life can be found only in societies of individuals.

conception of life to the divine conception of life. The whole history of the ancient peoples, lasting through thousands of years and ending with the history of Rome, is the history of the transition from the animal, personal view of life to the social view of life. The whole of history from the time of the Roman Empire and the appearance of Christianity is the history of the transition, through which we are still passing now, from the social view of life to the divine view of life.

This view of life is the last, and founded upon it is the Christian teaching, which is a guide for the whole of our life and lies at the root of all our activity, practical and theoretic. Yet men of what is falsely called science, pseudo-scientific men, looking at it only in its externals, regard it as something outgrown and having no value for us.

Reducing it to its dogmatic side only—to the doctrines of the Trinity, the redemption, the miracles, the Church, the sacraments, and so on—men of science regard it as only one of an immense number of religions which have arisen among mankind; and now, they say, having played out its part in history, it is outliving its own age and fading away before the light of science and of true enlightenment.

We come here upon what, in a large proportion of cases, forms the source of the

grossest errors of mankind. Men on a lower level of understanding, when brought into contact with phenomena of a higher order, instead of making efforts to understand them, to raise themselves up to the point of view from which they must look at the subject, judge it from their lower standpoint, and the less they understand what they are talking about, the more confidently and unhesitatingly they pass judgment on it.

To the majority of learned men, looking at the living, moral teaching of Christ from the lower standpoint of the state conception of life, this doctrine appears as nothing but a very indefinite and incongruous combination of Indian asceticism, Stoic and Neoplatonic philosophy, and insubstantial anti-social visions, which have no serious significance for our times. Its whole meaning is concentrated for them in its external manifestations —in Catholicism, Protestantism, in certain dogmas, or in the conflict with the temporal power. Estimating the value of Christianity by these phenomena is like a deaf man's judging of the character and quality of music by seeing the movements of the musicians.

The result of this is that all these scientific men, from Kant, Strauss, Spencer, and Renan down, do not understand the meaning of Christ's sayings, do not understand the significance, the object, or the reason of their utterance, do not understand even the

question to which they form the answer. Yet, without even taking the pains to enter into their meaning, they refuse, if unfavourably disposed, to recognise any reasonableness in his doctrines ; or if they want to treat them indulgently, they condescend, from the height of their superiority, to correct them, on the supposition that Christ meant to express precisely their own ideas, but did not succeed in doing so. They behave to His teaching much as self-assertive people talk to those whom they consider beneath them, often supplying their companions' words : "Yes, you mean to say this and that." This correction is always with the aim of reducing the teaching of the higher, divine conception of life to the level of the lower, state conception of life.

They usually say that the moral teaching of Christianity is very fine, but over-exaggerated ; that to make it quite right we must reject all in it that is superfluous and unnecessary to our manner of life. "And the doctrine that asks too much, and requires what cannot be performed, is worse than that which requires of men what is possible and consistent with their powers," these learned interpreters of Christianity maintain, repeating what was long ago asserted, and could not but be asserted by those who crucified the Teacher because they did not understand Him—the Jews.

It seems that in the judgment of the learned men of our time the Hebrew law—a tooth for a tooth, and an eye for an eye—is a law of just retaliation, known to mankind five thousand years before the law of holiness which Christ taught in its place.

It seems that all that has been done by those men who understood Christ's teaching literally, and lived in accordance with such an understanding of it, all that has been said and done by all true Christians, by all the Christian saints, all that is now reforming the world in the shape of socialism and communism—is simply exaggeration, not worth talking about.

After eighteen hundred years of education in Christianity the civilised world, as represented by its most advanced thinkers, holds the conviction that the Christian religion is a religion of dogmas; that its teaching in relation to life is unreasonable, and is an exaggeration, subversive of the real lawful obligations of morality consistent with the nature of man; and that very doctrine of retribution which Christ rejected, and in place of which He put His teaching, is more practically useful for us.

To learned men the doctrine of non-resistance to evil by force is exaggerated and even irrational. Christianity is much better without it, they think, not observing closely

what Christianity, as represented by them, amounts to.

They do not see that to say that the doctrine of non-resistance to evil is an exaggeration in Christ's teaching is just like saying that the statement of the equality of the radii of a circle is an exaggeration in the definition of a circle. And those who speak thus are acting precisely like a man who, having no idea of what a circle is, should declare that this requirement, that every point of the circumference should be an equal distance from the centre, is exaggerated. To advocate the rejection of Christ's command of non-resistance to evil, or its adaptation to the needs of life, implies a misunderstanding of the teaching of Christ.

And those who do so certainly do not understand it. They do not understand that this teaching is the institution of a new theory of life, corresponding to the new conditions on which men have entered now for eighteen hundred years, and also the definition of the new conduct of life which results from it. They do not believe that Christ meant to say what He said; or He seems to them to have said what He said in the Sermon on the Mount and in other places accidentally, or through His lack of intelligence or of cultivation.*

* Here, for example, is a characteristic view of that kind from the American journal the *Arena*, Oct. 1890: "New Basis

(Matt. vi. 25-34) : "Therefore I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink ; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment ? Behold the fowls of the air ; they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns ; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they ? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature ? And why take ye thought for raiment ? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow ; they toil not, neither do they spin ; and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore if God

of Church Life." Treating of the significance of the Sermon on the Mount and non-resistance to evil in particular, the author, being under no necessity, like the Churchmen, to hide its significance, says :

"Christ in fact preached complete communism and anarchy ; but one must learn to regard Christ always in His historical and psychological significance. Like every advocate of the love of humanity, Christ went to the furthest extreme in His teaching. Every step forwards towards the moral perfection of humanity is always guided by men who see nothing but their vocation. Christ, in no disparaging sense be it said, had the typical temperament of such a reformer. And therefore we must remember that His precepts cannot be understood literally as a complete philosophy of life. We ought to analyse His words with respect for them, but in the spirit of criticism, accepting what is true," &c.

Christ would have been happy to say what He ought, but He was not able to express Himself as exactly and clearly as we can in the spirit of criticism, and therefore let us correct Him. All that He said about meekness, sacrifice, lowliness, not caring for the morrow, was said by accident, through lack of knowing how to express Himself scientifically.

so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed? (for after all these things do the Gentiles seek), for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." (Luke xii. 33, 34): "Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Sell all thou hast, and follow Me; and he who will not leave father, or mother, or children, or brothers, or fields, or house, he cannot be My disciple. Deny thyself, take up thy cross each day, and follow Me. My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to perform His works. Not My will, but Thine be done, not what I will, but what Thou wilt, and not as I will, but as Thou wilt. Life is to do not one's will, but the will of God.

All these principles appear to men who regard them from the standpoint of a lower

conception of life as the expression of an impulsive enthusiasm, having no direct application to life. These principles, however, follow from the Christian theory of life, just as logically as the principles of paying a part of one's private gains to the commonwealth and of sacrificing one's life in defence of one's country follow from the state theory of life.

As the man of the state conception of life said to the savage: Reflect, bethink yourself! The life of your individuality cannot be true life, because that life is pitiful and passing. But the life of a society and succession of individuals, family, clan, tribe, or state, goes on living, and therefore a man must sacrifice his own individuality for the life of the family or the state. In exactly the same way the Christian doctrine says to the man of the social, state conception of life, Repent ye, *μετανοήτε*—i.e. bethink yourself, or you will be ruined. Understand that this casual, personal life which now comes into being and to-morrow is no more, can have no permanence, that no external means, no construction of it can give it consecutiveness and permanence. Take thought and understand that the life you are living is not real life—the life of the family, of society, of the state will not save you from annihilation. The true, the rational life is only possible for man according to the measure in which he can

participate, not in the family or the state, but in the source of life—the Father; according to the measure in which he can merge his life in the life of the Father. Such is undoubtedly the Christian conception of life, visible in every utterance of the Gospel.

One may not share this view of life, one may reject it, one may show its inaccuracy and its erroneousness, but we cannot judge of the Christian teaching without mastering this view of life. Still less can one criticise a subject on a higher plane from a lower point of view. From the basement one cannot judge of the effect of the spire. But this is just what the learned critics of the day try to do. For they share the erroneous idea of the orthodox believers that they are in possession of certain infallible means for investigating a subject. They fancy if they apply their so-called scientific methods of criticism, there can be no doubt of their conclusion being correct.

This testing the subject by the fancied infallible method of science is the principal obstacle to understanding the Christian religion for unbelievers, for so-called educated people. From this follow all the mistakes made by scientific men about the Christian religion, and especially two strange misconceptions which, more than everything else, hinder them from a correct understanding of it. One of these misconceptions is that the Christian

moral teaching cannot be carried out, and that therefore it has either no force at all—that is, it should not be accepted as the rule of conduct—or it must be transformed, adapted to the limits within which its fulfilment is possible in our society. Another misconception is that the Christian doctrine of love of God and therefore of His service, is an obscure, mystic principle, which gives no definite object for love, and should therefore be replaced by the more exact and comprehensible principles of love for men and the service of humanity.

The first misconception in regard to the impossibility of following the principle is the result of men of the state conception of life unconsciously taking that conception as the standard by which the Christian religion directs men, and taking the Christian principle of perfection as the rule by which that life is to be ordered, they think and say that to follow Christ's teaching is impossible, because the complete fulfilment of all that is required by this teaching would put an end to life. "If a man were to carry out all that Christ teaches, he would destroy his own life; and if all men carried it out, then the human race would come to an end," they say.

"If we take no thought for the morrow, what we shall eat and what we shall drink, and wherewithal we shall be clothed, do not defend our life, nor resist evil by force, lay

down our life for others, and observe perfect chastity, the human race cannot exist," they say.

And they are perfectly right if they take the principle of perfection given by Christ's teaching as a rule which every one is bound to fulfil, just as in the state principle of life every one is bound to carry out the rule of paying taxes, supporting the law, and so on.

The misconception is based precisely on the fact that the teaching of Christ guides men differently from the way in which the precepts founded on the lower conception of life guide men. The precepts of the state conception of life only guide men by requiring of them an exact fulfilment of rules or laws. Christ's teaching guides men by pointing them to the infinite perfection of their heavenly Father, to which every man independently and voluntarily struggles, whatever the degree of his imperfection in the present.

The misunderstanding of men who judge of the Christian principle from the point of view of the state principle, consists in the fact that on the supposition that the perfection which Christ points to can be fully attained, they ask themselves (just as they ask the same question on the supposition that state laws will be carried out) what will be the result of all this being carried out? This supposition cannot be made, because the

not expect to take absolutely no thought for the morrow, as is said in the Gospel, but only not to take too much thought for it; one cannot give away all to the poor, but one must give away a certain definite part; one need not aim at virginity, but one must avoid debauchery; one need not forsake wife and children, but one must not give too great a place to them in one's heart;" and so on.

But to speak like this is just like telling a man who is struggling on a swift river and directing his course against the current, that it is impossible to cross the river rowing against the current, and that to cross it he must float in the direction of the point he wants to reach.

In reality, in order to reach the place to which he wants to go, he must row with all his strength towards a point much higher up.

To let go the requirements of the ideal means not only to diminish the possibility of perfection, but to make an end of the ideal itself. The ideal that has power over men is not an ideal invented by some one, but the ideal that every man carries within his soul. Only this ideal of complete infinite perfection has power over men, and stimulates them to action. A moderate perfection loses its power of influencing men's hearts.

Christ's teaching only has power when it demands absolute perfection—that is, the fusion of the Divine nature which exists in

every man's soul with the will of God—the union of the son with the Father. Life, according to Christ's teaching, consists of nothing but this setting free of the son of God, existing in every man, from the animal, and in bringing him closer to the Father.

The animal existence of a man does not constitute human life alone. Life, according to the will of God only, is also not human life. Human life is a combination of the animal life and the Divine life. And the more this combination approaches to the Divine life, the more life there is in it.

Life, according to the Christian religion, is a progress towards the Divine perfection. No one condition, according to this doctrine, can be higher or lower than another. Every condition, according to this doctrine, is only a particular stage, of no consequence in itself, on the way towards unattainable perfection, and therefore in itself it does not imply a greater or lesser degree of life. Increase of life, according to this, consists in nothing but the quickening of the progress towards perfection. And therefore the progress towards perfection of the publican Zaccheus, of the woman that was a sinner, and of the robber on the cross, implies a higher degree of life than the stagnant righteousness of the Pharisee. And therefore for this religion there cannot be rules which it is obligatory to obey. The man who is at a lower level,

but is moving onwards towards perfection, is living a more moral, a better life, is more fully carrying out Christ's teaching, than the man on a much higher level of morality who is not moving onwards towards perfection.

It is in this sense that the lost sheep is dearer to the Father than those that were not lost. The prodigal son, the piece of money lost and found again, were more precious than those that were not lost.

The fulfilment of Christ's teaching consists in moving away from self towards God. It is obvious that there cannot be definite laws and rules for this fulfilment of the teaching. Every degree of perfection and every degree of imperfection are equal in it; no obedience to laws constitutes a fulfilment of this doctrine, and therefore for it there can be no binding rules and laws.

From this fundamental distinction between the religion of Christ and all preceding religions based on the state conception of life, follows a corresponding difference in the special precepts of the state theory and the Christian precepts. The precepts of the state theory of life insist for the most part on certain practical prescribed acts, by which men are justified and secure of being right. The Christian precepts (the commandment of love is not a precept in the strict sense of the word, but the expression of the very essence of the religion) are the five com-

mandments of the Sermon on the Mount—all negative in character. They show only what at a certain stage of development of humanity men may not do.

These commandments are, as it were, sign-posts on the endless road to perfection, towards which humanity is moving, showing the point of perfection which is possible at a certain period in the development of humanity.

Christ has given expression in the Sermon on the Mount to the eternal ideal towards which men are spontaneously struggling, and also the degree of attainment of it to which men may reach in our times.

The ideal is not to desire to do ill to any one, not to provoke ill-will, to love all men. The precept, showing the level below which we cannot fall in the attainment of this ideal, is the prohibition of evil-speaking. And that is the first command.

The ideal is perfect chastity even in thought. The precept, showing the level below which we cannot fall in the attainment of this ideal, is that of purity of married life, avoidance of debauchery. That is the second command.

The ideal is to take no thought for the future, to live in the present moment. The precept showing the level below which we cannot fall, is the prohibition of swearing, of promising anything in the future. And that is the third command.

The ideal is never for any purpose to use force. The precept showing the level below which we cannot fall is that of returning good for evil, being patient under wrong, giving the cloak also. That is the fourth command.

The ideal is to love the enemies who hate us. The precept showing the level below which we cannot fall, is not to do evil to our enemies, to speak well of them, and to make no difference between them and our neighbours.

All these precepts are indications of what, on our journey to perfection, we are already fully able to avoid, and what we must labour to attain now, and what we ought by degrees to translate into instinctive and unconscious habits. But these precepts, far from constituting the whole of Christ's teaching and exhausting it, are simply stages on the way to perfection. These precepts must and will be followed by higher and higher precepts on the way to the perfection held up by religion.

And therefore it is essentially a part of the Christian religion to make demands higher than those expressed in its precepts; and by no means to diminish the demands either of the ideal itself, or of the precepts, as people imagine who judge it from the standpoint of the social conception of life.

So much for one misunderstanding of the scientific men, in relation to the import and

aim of Christ's teaching. Another misunderstanding arising from the same source consists in substituting love for men, the service of humanity, for the Christian principles of love for God and His service.

The Christian doctrine to love God and serve Him, and only as a result of that love to love and serve one's neighbour, seems to scientific men obscure, mystic, and arbitrary. And they would absolutely exclude the obligation of love and service of God, holding that the doctrine of love for men, for humanity alone, is far more clear, tangible, and reasonable.

Scientific men teach in theory that the only good and rational life is that which is devoted to the service of the whole of humanity. That is for them the import of the Christian doctrine, and to that they reduce Christ's teaching. They seek confirmation of their own doctrine in the Gospel, on the supposition that the two doctrines are really the same.

This idea is an absolutely mistaken one. The Christian doctrine has nothing in common with the doctrine of the Positivists, Communists, and all the apostles of the universal brotherhood of mankind, based on the general advantage of such a brotherhood. They differ from one another especially in Christianity's having a firm and clear basis in the human soul, while love

for humanity is only a theoretical deduction from analogy.

The doctrine of love for humanity alone is based on the social conception of life.

The essence of the social conception of life consists in the transference of the aim of the individual life to the life of societies of individuals: family, clan, tribe or state. This transference is accomplished easily and naturally in its earliest forms, in the transference of the aim of life from the individual to the family and the clan. The transference to the tribe or the nation is more difficult and requires special training. And the transference of the sentiment to the state is the furthest limit which the process can reach.

To love oneself is natural to every one, and no one needs any encouragement to do so. To love one's clan who support and protect one, to love one's wife, the joy and help of one's existence, one's children, the hope and consolation of one's life, and one's parents who have given one life and education, is natural. And such love, though far from being so strong as love of self, is met with pretty often.

To love—for one's own sake, through personal pride—one's tribe, one's nation, though not so natural, is nevertheless common. Love of one's own people who are of the same blood, the same tongue, and the same religion as oneself, is possible, though

far from being so strong as love of self, or even love of family or clan. But love for a state, such as Turkey, Germany, England, Austria or Russia, is a thing almost impossible. And though it is zealously inculcated, it is only an imagined sentiment; it has no existence in reality. And at that limit man's power of transferring his interest ceases, and he cannot feel any direct sentiment for that fictitious entity. The Positivists, however, and all the apostles of fraternity on scientific principles, without taking into consideration the weakening of sentiment in proportion to the extension of its object, draw further deductions in theory in the same direction. "Since," they say, "it was for the advantage of the individual to extend his personal interest to the family, the tribe, and subsequently to the nation and the state, it would be still more advantageous to extend his interest in societies of men to the whole of mankind, and so all to live for humanity just as men live for the family or the state."

Theoretically, it follows indeed, having extended the love and interest for the personality to the family, the tribe, and thence to the nation and the state, it would be perfectly logical for men to save themselves the strife and calamities which result from the division of mankind into nations and states, by extending their love to the whole of humanity. This would be most

logical, and, theoretically, nothing would appear more natural to its advocates, who do not observe that love is a sentiment which may or may not be felt, but which it is useless to advocate ; and, moreover, that love must have an object, and that humanity is not an object. It is nothing but a fiction.

The family, the tribe, even the state, were not invented by men, but formed themselves spontaneously, like ant-hills or swarms of bees, and have a real existence. The man who, for the sake of his own animal personality, loves his family, knows whom he loves : Anna, Dolly, John, Peter, and so on. The man who loves his tribe and takes pride in it, knows that he loves all the Guelphs or all the Ghibellines ; the man who loves the state knows that he loves France bounded by the Rhine and the Pyrenees, and its principal city Paris, and its history and so on. But the man who loves humanity—what does he love ? There is such a thing as a state, as a nation ; there is the abstract conception of man : but humanity as a concrete idea does not, and cannot exist.

Humanity ! Where is the definition of humanity ? Where does it end and where does it begin ? Does humanity end with the savage, the idiot, the dipsomaniac, or the madman ? If we draw a line excluding from humanity its lowest representatives, where are we to draw the line ? Shall we exclude

the negroes like the Americans, or the Hindoos like some Englishmen, or the Jews like some others? If we include all men without exception, why should we not include also the higher animals, many of whom are superior to the lowest specimens of the human race.

We know nothing of humanity as an eternal object, and we know nothing of its limits. Humanity is a fiction, and it is impossible to love it. It would, doubtless, be very advantageous if men could love humanity just as they love their family. It would be very advantageous, as Communists advocate, to replace the competitive, individualistic organisation of men's activity by a social universal organisation, so that each would be for all and all for each. Only there are no motives to lead men to do this. The Positivists, the Communists, and all the apostles of fraternity on scientific principles, advocate the extension to the whole of humanity of the love men feel for themselves, their families, and the state. They forget that the love which they are discussing is a personal love, which might expand in a rarefied form to embrace a man's native country, but which disappears before it can embrace an artificial state such as Austria, England, or Turkey, and which we cannot even conceive of in relation to all humanity, an absolutely mystic conception.

"A man loves himself (his animal personality), he loves his family, he even loves his

native country. Why should he not love humanity? That would be such an excellent thing. And by the way, it is precisely what is taught by Christianity." So think the advocates of Positivist, Communistic, or Socialistic fraternity.

It would indeed be an excellent thing. But it can never be, for the love that is based on a personal or social conception of life can never rise beyond love for the state.

The fallacy of the argument lies in the fact that the social conception of life, on which love for family and nation is founded, rests itself on love of self, and that love grows weaker and weaker as it is extended from self to family, tribe, nationality and state; and in the state we reach the furthest limit beyond which it cannot go.

The necessity of extending the sphere of love is beyond dispute. But in reality the possibility of this love is destroyed by the necessity of extending its object indefinitely. And thus the insufficiency of personal, human love is made manifest.

And here the advocates of Positivist, Communistic, Socialistic fraternity propose to draw upon Christian love to make up the default of this bankrupt human love; but Christian love only in its results, not in its foundations. They propose love for humanity alone, apart from love for God.

But such a love cannot exist. There is no

motive to produce it. Christian love is the result only of the Christian conception of life, in which the aim of life is to love and serve God.

The social conception of life has led men, by a natural transition from love of self and then of family, tribe, nation and state, to a consciousness of the necessity of love for humanity, a conception which has no definite limits and extends to all living things. And this necessity for love of what awakens no kind of sentiment in a man, is a contradiction which cannot be solved by the social theory of life.

The Christian doctrine in its full significance can alone solve it, by giving a new meaning to life. Christianity recognises love of self, of family, of nation, and of humanity, and not only of humanity but of everything living, everything existing; it recognises the necessity of an infinite extension of the sphere of love. But the object of this love is not found outside self in societies of individuals, nor in the external world, but within self, in the divine self whose essence is that very love, which the animal self is brought to feel the need of through its consciousness of its own perishable nature.

The difference between the Christian doctrine and those which preceded it, is that the social doctrine said: "Live in opposition to your nature (understanding by this only the

animal nature), make it subject to the external law of family, society, and state." Christianity says: "Live according to your nature (understanding by this the divine nature); do not make it subject to anything—neither you (an animal self), nor that of others—and you will attain the very aim to which you are striving when you subject your external self."

The Christian doctrine brings man to the elementary consciousness of self, only not of the animal self, but of the divine self, the divine spark, the self as the Son of God, as much God as the Father Himself, though confined in an animal husk. The consciousness of being the Son of God, whose chief characteristic is love, satisfies the need for the extension of the sphere of love to which the man of the social conception of life had been brought. For the latter, the welfare of the personality demanded an ever-widening extension of the sphere of love; love was a necessity and was confined to certain objects, self, family, society. With the Christian conception of life, love is not a necessity and is confined to no object; it is the essential faculty of the human soul. Man loves not because it is his interest to love this or that, but because love is the essence of his soul, because he cannot but love.

The Christian doctrine shows man that the essence of his soul is love—that his happiness depends not on loving this or that object, but

on loving the principle of the whole—God, whom he recognises within himself as love, and therefore he loves all things and all men.

In this is the fundamental difference between the Christian doctrine and the doctrine of the Positivists, and all the theorisers about universal brotherhood on non-Christian principles.

Such are the two principal misunderstandings relating to the Christian religion, from which the greater number of false reasonings about it proceed. The first consists in the belief that Christ's teaching instructs men, like all previous religions, by rules, which they are bound to follow, and that these rules cannot be fulfilled. The second is the idea that the whole purport of Christianity is to teach men to live advantageously together, as one family, and that to attain this we need only follow the rule of love to humanity, dismissing all thought of love of God altogether.

The mistaken notion of scientific men that the essence of Christianity consists in the supernatural, and that its moral teaching is impracticable, constitutes another reason of the failure of men of the present day to understand Christianity.

CHAPTER V

CONTRADICTION BETWEEN OUR LIFE AND OUR CHRISTIAN CONSCIENCE

Men think they can accept Christianity without altering their life—Pagan conception of life does not correspond with present stage of development of humanity, and Christian conception alone can accord with it—Christian conception of life not yet understood by men, but the progress of life itself will lead them inevitably to adopt it—The requirements of a new theory of life always seem incomprehensible, mystic and supernatural—So seem the requirements of the Christian theory of life to the majority of men—The absorption of the Christian conception of life will inevitably be brought about as the result of material and spiritual causes—The fact of men knowing the requirements of the higher view of life, and yet continuing to preserve inferior organisations of life, leads to contradictions and sufferings which embitter existence and must result in its transformation—The contradictions of our life—The economic contradiction and the suffering induced by it for rich and poor alike—The political contradiction and the sufferings induced by obedience to the laws of the state—The international contradiction and the recognition of it by contemporaries: Komarovsky, Ferry, Booth, Passy, Lawson, Wilson, Bartlett, Defourney, Moneta—The striking character of the military contradiction.

THERE are many reasons why Christ's teaching is not understood. One reason is that people suppose they have understood it when they have decided, as the Churchmen do, that

it was revealed by supernatural means, or when they have studied, as the scientific men do, the external forms in which it has been manifested. Another reason is the mistaken notion that it is impracticable, and ought to be replaced by the doctrine of love for humanity. But the principal reason, which is the source of all the other mistaken ideas about it, is the notion that Christianity is a doctrine which can be accepted or rejected without any change of life.

Men who are used to the existing order of things, who like it and dread its being changed, try to take the doctrine as a collection of revelations and rules which one can accept without their modifying one's life. Whilst Christ's teaching is not only a doctrine which gives rules which a man must follow, it unfolds a new meaning in life, and defines a whole world of human activity quite different from all that has preceded it and appropriate to the period on which man is entering.

The life of humanity changes and advances like the life of the individual by stages, and every stage has a theory of life appropriate to it, which is inevitably absorbed by men. Those who do not absorb it consciously, absorb it unconsciously. It is the same with the changes in the beliefs of peoples and of all humanity, as it is with the changes of belief of individuals. If the father of a family continues

to be guided in his conduct by his childish conceptions of life, life becomes so difficult for him that he involuntarily seeks another philosophy and readily absorbs that which is appropriate to his age.

That is just what is happening now to humanity at this time of transition through which we are passing, from the Pagan conception of life to the Christian. The socialised man of the present day is brought by experience of life itself to the necessity of abandoning the Pagan conception of life, which is inappropriate to the present stage of humanity, and of submitting to the obligation of the Christian doctrines, the truths of which, however corrupt and misinterpreted, are still known to him, and alone offer him a solution of the contradictions surrounding him.

If the requirements of the Christian doctrine seem strange and even alarming to the man of the social theory of life, no less strange, incomprehensible, and alarming to the savage of ancient times seemed the requirements of the social doctrine when it was not fully understood and could not be foreseen in its results.

"It is unreasonable," said the savage, "to sacrifice my peace of mind or my life in defence of something incomprehensible, impalpable and conventional—family, tribe, or nation; and above all it is unsafe to put oneself at the disposal of the power of others."

But the time came when the savage on one hand felt, though vaguely, the value of the social conception of life, and of its chief motor-power, social censure or social approbation—glory; and when, on the other hand, the difficulties of his personal life became so great that he could not continue to believe in the value of his old theory of life. Then he accepted the social, state theory of life and submitted to it.

That is just what the man of the social theory of life is passing through now.

"It is unreasonable," says the socialised man, "to sacrifice my welfare, and that of my family and my country, in order to fulfil some higher law, which requires me to renounce my most natural and virtuous feelings of love of self, of family, of kindred and of country; and above all it is unsafe to part with the security of life afforded by the organisation of government."

But the time is coming when on one hand the vague consciousness in his soul of the higher law, of love to God and his neighbour, and, on the other hand, the suffering resulting from the contradictions of life, will force the man to reject the social theory and to assimilate the new one prepared ready for him, which solves all the contradictions and removes all his sufferings, the Christian theory of life. And this time has now come.

We who, thousands of years ago, passed

through the transition, from the personal, animal view of life to the socialised view, imagine that that transition was an inevitable and natural one; but this transition through which we have been passing for the last eighteen hundred years, seems arbitrary, unnatural, and alarming. But we only fancy this because that first transition has been so fully completed that the practice attained by it has become unconscious and instinctive in us; while the present transition is not yet over, and we have to complete it consciously.

It took ages, thousands of years, for the social conception of life to permeate men's consciousness. It went through various forms and has now passed into the region of the instinctive through inheritance, education, and habit. And therefore it seems natural to us. But five thousand years ago it seemed as unnatural and alarming to men as the Christian doctrine in its true sense seems to-day.

We think to-day that the requirements of the Christian doctrine—of universal brotherhood, suppression of national distinctions, abolition of private property, and the strange injunction of non-resistance to evil by force—demand what is impossible. But it was just the same thousands of years ago, with every social or even family duty, such as the duty of parents to support their children, of the young to maintain the old, of fidelity in

marriage. Still more strange, and even unreasonable, seemed the state duties of submitting to the appointed authority, and paying taxes, and fighting in defence of the country, and so on. All such requirements seem simple, comprehensible, and natural to us to-day, and we see nothing mysterious or alarming in them. But three or five thousand years ago they seemed to require what was impossible.

The social conception of life served as the basis of religion, because at the time when it was first presented to men it seemed to them absolutely incomprehensible, mystic, and supernatural. Now that we have outlived that phase of the life of humanity, we understand the rational grounds for uniting men in families, communities, and states. But in antiquity the duties involved by such association were presented under cover of the supernatural and were confirmed by it.

The patriarchal religions exalted the family, the tribe, the nation. State religions deified emperors and states. Even now most ignorant people—like our peasants, who call the Tsar an earthly god—obey state laws, not through any rational recognition of their necessity, nor because they have any conception of the meaning of state, but through a religious sentiment.

In precisely the same way the Christian doctrine is presented to men of the social or

heathen theory of life to-day, in the guise of a supernatural religion, though there is in reality nothing mysterious, mystic, or supernatural about it. It is simply the theory of life which is appropriate to the present degree of material development, the present stage of growth of humanity, and which must therefore inevitably be accepted.

The time will come—it is already coming—when the Christian principles of equality and fraternity, community of property, non-resistance of evil by force, will appear just as natural and simple as the principles of family or social life seem to us now.

Humanity can no more go backward in its development than the individual man. Men have outlived the social, family, and state conceptions of life. Now they must go forward and assimilate the next and higher conception of life, which is what is now taking place. This change is brought about in two ways: consciously through spiritual causes, and unconsciously through material causes.

Just as the individual man very rarely changes his way of life at the dictates of his reason alone, but generally continues to live as before, in spite of the new interests and aims, revealed to him by his reason, and only alters his way of living when it has become absolutely opposed to his conscience, and consequently intolerable to him; so, too, humanity, long after it has learnt through its religions

the new interests and aims of life, towards which it must strive, continues in the majority of its representatives to live as before, and is only brought to accept the new conception by finding it impossible to go on living its old life as before.

Though the need of a change of life is preached by the religious leaders and recognised and realised by the most intelligent men, the majority, in spite of their reverential attitude to their leaders, that is, their faith in their teaching, continue to be guided by the old theory of life in their present complex existence. As though the father of a family, knowing how he ought to behave at his age, should yet continue through habit and thoughtlessness to live in the same childish way as he did in boyhood.

That is just what is happening in the transition of humanity from one stage to another, through which we are passing now. Humanity has outgrown its social stage and has entered upon a new period. It recognises the doctrine which ought to be made the basis of life in this new period. But through inertia it continues to keep up the old forms of life. From this inconsistency between the new conception of life and practical life follows a whole succession of contradictions and sufferings which embitter our life and necessitate its alteration.

One need only compare the practice of

life with the theory of it, to be dismayed at the glaring antagonism between our conditions of life and our conscience.

Our whole life is in flat contradiction with all we know, and with all we regard as necessary and right. This contradiction runs through everything, in economic life, in political life, and in international life. As though we had forgotten what we knew and put away for a time the principles we believe in (we cannot help still believing in them because they are the only foundation we have to base our life on), we do the very opposite of all that our conscience and our common sense require of us.

We are guided in economical, political, and international questions by the principles which were appropriate to men of three or five thousand years ago, though they are directly opposed to our conscience and the conditions of life in which we are placed to-day.

It was very well for the man of ancient times to live in a society based on the division of mankind into masters and slaves, because he believed that such a distinction was decreed by God and must always exist. But is such a belief possible in these days?

The man of antiquity could believe he had the right to enjoy the good things of this world at the expense of other men, and to keep them in misery for generations, since

he believed that men came from different origins, were base or noble in blood, children of Ham or of Japhet. The greatest sages of the world, the teachers of humanity, Plato and Aristotle, justified the existence of slaves and demonstrated the lawfulness of slavery; and even three centuries ago, the men who described an imaginary society of the future, Utopia, could not conceive of it without slaves.

Men of ancient and mediæval times believed, firmly believed, that men are not equal, that the only true men are Persians, or Greeks, or Romans, or Franks. But we cannot believe that now. And people who sacrifice themselves for the principles of aristocracy and of patriotism to-day, don't believe and can't believe what they assert.

We all know and cannot help knowing—even though we may never have heard the idea clearly expressed, may never have read of it, and may never have put it into words, still through unconsciously imbibing the Christian sentiments that are in the air—with our whole heart we know and cannot escape knowing the fundamental truth of the Christian doctrine, that we are all sons of one Father; wherever we may live and whatever language we may speak, we are all brothers, and are all subject to the same law of love implanted by our common Father in our hearts.

Whatever the opinions and degree of education of a man of to-day, whatever his shade of liberalism, whatever his school of philosophy, or of science, or of economics, however ignorant or superstitious he may be, every man of the present day knows that all men have an equal right to life and the good things of life, and that one set of people are no better nor worse than another, that all are equal. Every one knows this, beyond doubt; every one feels it in his whole being. Yet at the same time every one sees all round him the division of men into two castes—the one, labouring, oppressed, poor and suffering, the other idle, oppressing, luxurious and profligate. And every one not only sees this, but voluntarily or involuntarily in one way or another he takes part in maintaining this distinction which his conscience condemns. And he cannot help suffering from the consciousness of this contradiction and his share in it.

Whether he be master or slave, the man of to-day cannot help constantly feeling the painful opposition between his conscience and actual life, and the miseries resulting from it.

The toiling masses, the immense majority of mankind who are suffering under the incessant, meaningless, and hopeless toil and privation in which their whole life is swallowed up, still find their keenest suffering in the

glaring contrast between what is and what ought to be, according to all the beliefs held by themselves, and those who have brought them to that condition and keep them in it.

They know that they are in slavery and condemned to privation and darkness to minister to the lusts of the minority who keep them down. They know it, and they say so plainly. And this knowledge increases their sufferings and constitutes its bitterest sting.

The slave of antiquity knew that he was a slave by nature, but our labourer, while he feels he is a slave, knows that he ought not to be, and so he tastes the agony of Tantalus, for ever desiring and never gaining what might and ought to be his.

The sufferings of the working classes springing from the contradiction between what is and what ought to be, are increased tenfold by the envy and hatred engendered by their consciousness of it.

The labourer of the present day would not cease to suffer even if his toil were much lighter than that of the slave of ancient times, even if he gained an eight-hour working day and a wage of three dollars a day. For he is working at the manufacture of things which he will not enjoy, working not at his own will for his own benefit, but through necessity, to satisfy the desires of luxurious and idle people in general, and for the profit

of a single rich man, the owner of a factory or workshop in particular. And he knows that all this is going on in a world in which it is a recognised scientific principle that labour alone creates wealth, and that to profit by the labour of others is immoral, dishonest, and punishable by law; in a world, moreover, which professes to believe Christ's doctrine that we are all brothers, and that true merit and dignity is to be found in serving one's neighbour, not in exploiting him. All this he knows, and he cannot but suffer keenly from the sharp contrast between what is and what ought to be.

"According to all principles, according to all I know, and what every one professes," the workman says to himself, "I ought to be free, equal to every one else, and loved; and I am—a slave, humiliated and hated." And he, too, is filled with hatred and tries to find means to escape from his position, to shake off the enemy who is overriding him, and to oppress him in turn. People say, "Workmen have no business to try to become capitalists, the poor to try to put themselves in the place of the rich." That is a mistake. The working men and the poor would be wrong if they tried to do so in a world in which slaves and masters were regarded as different species created by God; but they are living in a world which professes the faith of the Gospel, that all are alike sons of God,

and so brothers and equal. And however men may try to conceal it, one of the first conditions of Christian life is love, not in words, but in deeds.

The man of the so-called educated classes lives in still more glaring inconsistency and suffering. Every educated man, if he believes in anything, believes in the brotherhood of all men, or at least he has a sentiment of humanity, or else of justice, or else he believes in science. And all the while he knows that his whole life is framed on principles in direct opposition to it all, to all the principles of Christianity, humanity, justice, and science.

He knows that all the habits in which he has been brought up, and which he could not give up without suffering, can only be satisfied through the exhausting, often fatal, toil of oppressed labourers, that is, through the most obvious and brutal violation of the principles of Christianity, humanity and justice, and even of science (that is, economic science). He advocates the principles of fraternity, humanity, justice and science, and yet he lives so that he is dependent on the oppression of the working classes, which he denounces, and his whole life is based on the advantages gained by their oppression. Moreover, he is directing every effort to maintaining this state of things so flatly opposed to all his beliefs.

We are all brothers, and yet every morning

a brother or a sister must empty the bedroom slops for me. We are all brothers, but every morning I must have a cigar, a sweet-meat, an ice, and such things, which my brothers and sisters have been wasting their health in manufacturing, and I enjoy these things and demand them. We are all brothers, yet I live by working in a bank, or mercantile house, or shop at making all goods dearer for my brothers. We are all brothers, but I live on a salary paid me for prosecuting, judging and condemning the thief or the prostitute, whose existence the whole tenor of my life tends to bring about, and whom I know ought not to be punished, but reformed. We are all brothers, but I live on the salary I gain by collecting taxes from needy labourers to be spent on the luxuries of the rich and idle. We are all brothers, but I take a stipend for preaching a false Christian religion, which I do not myself believe in, and which only serves to hinder men from understanding true Christianity. I take a stipend as priest or bishop for deceiving men in the matter of the greatest importance to them. We are all brothers, but I will not give the poor the benefit of my educational, medical, or literary labours except for money. We are all brothers, yet I take a salary for being ready to commit murder, for teaching men to murder, or making firearms, gunpowder, or fortifications.

The whole life of the upper classes is a constant inconsistency. The more delicate a man's conscience is, the more painful this contradiction is to him.

A man of sensitive conscience cannot but suffer if he lives such a life. The only means by which he can escape from this suffering is by blunting his conscience, but even if some men succeed in dulling their conscience they cannot dull their fears.

The men of the higher dominating classes whose conscience is naturally not sensitive or has become blunted, if they don't suffer through conscience, suffer from fear and hatred. They are bound to suffer. They know all the hatred of them existing, and inevitably existing in the working classes. They are aware that the working classes know that they are deceived and exploited, and that they are beginning to organise themselves to shake off oppression and revenge themselves on their oppressors. The higher classes see the unions, the strikes, the May-day celebrations, and feel the calamity that is threatening them, and their terror passes into an instinct of self-defence and hatred. They know that if for one instant they are worsted in the struggle with their oppressed slaves, they will perish, because the slaves are exasperated and their exasperation is growing more intense with every day of oppression. The oppressors,

even if they wished to do so, could not make an end to oppression. They know that they themselves will perish directly they even relax the harshness of their oppression. And they do not relax it, in spite of all their pretended care for the welfare of the working classes, for the eight-hour day, for regulation of the labour of minors and of women, for savings-banks and pensions. All that is humbug, or else simply anxiety to keep the slave fit to do his work. But the slave is still a slave, and the master who cannot live without a slave is less disposed to set him free than ever.

The attitude of the ruling classes to the labourers, is that of a man who has felled his adversary to the earth and holds him down, not so much because he wants to hold him down, as because he knows that if he let him go, even for a second, he would himself be stabbed, for his adversary is infuriated and has a knife in his hand. And therefore, whether their conscience is tender or the reverse, our rich men cannot enjoy the wealth they have filched from the poor as the ancients did who believed in their right to it. Their whole life and all their enjoyments are embittered either by the stings of conscience or by terror.

So much for the economic contradiction. The political contradiction is even more striking.

All men are brought up to the habit of obeying the laws of the state before everything. The whole existence of modern times is defined by laws. A man marries and is divorced, educates his children, and even (in many countries) professes his religious faith in accordance with the law. What about the law, then, which defines our whole existence? Do men believe in it? Do they regard it as good? Not at all. In the majority of cases people of the present time do not believe in the justice of the law, they despise it, but still they obey it. It was very well for the men of the ancient world to observe their laws. They firmly believed that their law (it was generally of a religious character) was the only just law which every one ought to obey. But is it so with us? We know and cannot help knowing that the law of our country is not the one eternal law; that it is only one of the many laws of different countries, which are equally imperfect, often obviously wrong and unjust, and are criticised from every point of view in the newspapers. The Jew might well obey his laws, since he had not the slightest doubt that God had written them with His finger; the Roman, too, might well obey the laws which he thought had been dictated by the nymph Egeria. Men might well observe the laws if they believed the Tsars who made them were God's anointed, or even if they thought they were

the work of assemblies of lawgivers who had the power and the desire to make them as good as possible. But we all know how our laws are made. We have all been behind the scenes, we know that they are the product of covetousness, trickery, and party struggles ; that there is not and cannot be any real justice in them. And so modern men cannot believe that obedience to civic or political laws can satisfy the demands of the reason or of human nature. Men have long ago recognised that it is irrational to obey a law the justice of which is very doubtful, and so they cannot but suffer in obeying a law which they do not accept as judicious and binding.

A man cannot but suffer when his whole life is defined beforehand for him by laws, which he must obey under threat of punishment, though he does not believe in their wisdom or justice, and often clearly perceives their injustice, cruelty, and artificiality.

We recognise the uselessness of customs and import duties, and are obliged to pay them. We recognise the uselessness of the expenditure on the maintenance of the Court and other members of government, and we regard the teaching of the Church as injurious, but we are obliged to bear our share of the expenses of these institutions. We regard the punishments inflicted by law as cruel and shameless, but we must assist in supporting them. We regard as unjust and

pernicious the distribution of landed property, but we are obliged to submit to it. We see no necessity for wars and armies, but we must bear terribly heavy burdens in support of troops and war expenses.

But this contradiction is nothing in comparison with the contradiction which confronts us when we turn to international questions, and which demands a solution under pain of the loss of the sanity and even the existence of the human race. That is the contradiction between the Christian conscience and war.

We are all Christian nations, living the same spiritual life, so that every noble and pregnant thought springing up at one end of the world is at once communicated to the whole of Christian humanity, and evokes everywhere the same emotion of pride and rejoicing without distinction of nationalities. We who love thinkers, philanthropists, poets, and scientific men of foreign origin, and are as proud of the exploits of Father Damien as if he were one of ourselves, we, who have a simple love for men of foreign nationalities, Frenchmen, Germans, Americans, and Englishmen, who respect their qualities, are glad to meet them and make them so warmly welcome, cannot regard war with them as anything heroic. We cannot even imagine without horror the possibility of a disagreement between these people and ourselves which

would call for reciprocal murder. Yet we are all bound to take a hand in this slaughter which is bound to come to pass to-morrow, if not to-day.

It was very well for the Jew, the Greek, and the Roman to defend the independence of his nation by murder. For he piously believed that his people was the only true, fine, and good people dear to God, and all the rest were Philistines, barbarians. Men of mediæval times—even up to the end of last and beginning of this century—might continue to hold this belief. But however much we work upon ourselves we cannot believe it. And this contradiction for men of the present day has become so full of horror that without its solution life is no longer possible.

"We live in a time which is full of inconsistencies," writes Count Komarovsky, the professor of international law, in his learned treatise. "The press of all countries is continually expressing the universal desire for peace, and the general sense of its necessity for all nations.

"Representatives of governments, private persons, and official organs say the same thing; it is repeated in parliamentary debates, diplomatic correspondence, and even in state treaties. At the same time governments are increasing the strength of their armies every year, levying fresh taxes, raising loans, and leaving as a bequest to

future generations the duty of repairing the blunders of the senseless policy of the present. What a striking contrast between words and deeds! Of course governments will plead in justification of these measures that all their expenditure and armaments are exclusively for purposes of defence. But it remains a mystery to every disinterested man whence they can expect attacks if all the great powers are single-hearted in their policy, in pursuing nothing but self-defence. In reality it looks as if each of the great powers were every instant anticipating an attack on the part of the others. And this results in a general feeling of insecurity and superhuman efforts on the part of each government to increase their forces beyond those of the other powers. Such a competition of itself increases the danger of war. Nations cannot endure the constant increase of armies for long, and sooner or later they will prefer war to all the disadvantages of their present position and the constant menace of war. Then the most trifling pretext will be sufficient to throw the whole of Europe into the fire of universal war. And it is a mistaken idea that such a crisis might deliver us from the political and economical troubles that are crushing us. The experience of the wars of latter years teaches us that every war has only intensified national hatreds, made military burdens

more crushing and insupportable, and rendered the political and economical position of Europe more grievous and insoluble."

"Modern Europe keeps under arms an active army of nine millions of men," writes Enrico Ferri, "besides fifteen millions of reserve, with an outlay of four hundred millions of francs per annum. By continual increase of the armed force, the sources of social and individual prosperity are paralysed, and the state of the modern world may be compared to that of a man who condemns himself to wasting from lack of nutrition in order to provide himself with arms, losing thereby the strength to use the arms he provides, under the weight of which he will at last succumb."

Charles Booth, in his paper read in London before the Association for the Reform and Codification of the Law of Nations, June 26th, 1887, says the same thing. After referring to the same number, nine millions of the active army and seventeen millions of reserve, and the enormous expenditure of governments on the support and arming of these forces, he says: "These figures represent only a small part of the real cost, because besides the recognised expenditure of the war budget of the various nations, we ought also to take into account the enormous loss to society involved in with-

drawing from it such an immense number of its most vigorous men, who are taken from industrial pursuits and every kind of labour, as well as the enormous interest on the sums expended on military preparations without any return. The inevitable result of this expenditure on war and preparations for war is a continually growing national debt. The greater number of loans raised by the governments of Europe were with a view to war. Their total sum amounts to four hundred millions sterling, and these debts are increasing every year."

The same Professor Komarovsky says in another place: "We live in troubled times. Everywhere we hear complaints of the depression of trade and manufactures, and the wretchedness of the economic position generally, the miserable conditions of existence of the working classes, and the universal impoverishment of the masses. But in spite of this, governments in their efforts to maintain their independence rush to the greatest extremes of senselessness. New taxes and duties are being devised everywhere, and the financial oppression of the nations knows no limits. If we glance at the budgets of the states of Europe for the last hundred years, what strikes us most of all is their rapid and continually growing increase.

"How can we explain this extraordinary
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phenomenon which sooner or later threatens us all with inevitable bankruptcy?

"It is caused beyond dispute by the expenditure for the maintenance of armaments which swallows up a third and even a half of all the expenditure of European states. And the most melancholy thing is that one can foresee no limit to this augmentation of the budget and impoverishment of the masses. What is socialism but a protest against this abnormal position in which the greater proportion of the population of our world is placed?"

"We are ruining ourselves," says Frederic Passy in a letter read before the last Congress of Universal Peace (in 1890) in London, "we are ruining ourselves in order to be able to take part in the senseless wars of the future or to pay the interest on debts we have incurred by the senseless and criminal wars of the past. We are dying of hunger so as to secure the means of killing each other."

Speaking later on of the way the subject is looked at in France, he says: "We believe that a hundred years after the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the citizen, the time has come to recognise the rights of nations and to renounce at once and for ever all those undertakings based on fraud and force, which under the name of conquests are veritable crimes against humanity, and which,

whatever the vanity of monarchs and the pride of nations may think of them, only weaken even those who are triumphant over them."

"I am surprised at the way religion is carried on in this country," says Sir Wilfrid Lawson at the same Congress. "You send a boy to Sunday-school, and you tell him: 'Dear boy, you must love your enemies. If another boy strikes you, you mustn't hit him back, but try to reform him by loving him.' Well. The boy stays in the Sunday-school till he is fourteen or fifteen, and then his friends send him into the army. What has he to do in the army? He certainly won't love his enemy, quite the contrary, if he can only get at him, he will run him through with his bayonet. That is the nature of all religious teaching in this country. I do not think that that is a very good way of carrying out the precepts of religion. I think if it is a good thing for a boy to love his enemy, it is good for a grown-up man."

"There are in Europe twenty-eight millions of men under arms," says Wilson, "to decide disputes, not by discussion, but by murdering one another. That is the accepted method for deciding disputes among Christian nations. This method is, at the same time, very expensive, for, according to the statistics I have read, the nations of Europe spent in the year 1872 a hundred

and fifty millions sterling on preparations for deciding disputes by means of murder. It seems to me, therefore, that in such a state of things one of two alternatives must be admitted: either Christianity is a failure, or those who have undertaken to expound it have failed in doing so. Until our warriors are disarmed and our armies disbanded, we have not the right to call ourselves a Christian nation."

In a conference on the subject of the duty of Christian ministers to preach against war, G. D. Bartlett said among other things: "If I understand the Scriptures, I say that men are only playing with Christianity so long as they ignore the question of war. I have lived a longish life, and have heard our ministers preach on universal peace hardly half a dozen times. Twenty years ago in a drawing-room, I dared in the presence of forty persons to moot the proposition that war was incompatible with Christianity; I was regarded as an arrant fanatic. The idea that we could get on without war was regarded as unmitigated weakness and folly."

The Catholic priest Defourney has expressed himself in the same spirit. "One of the first precepts of the eternal law inscribed in the consciences of all men," says the Abbé Defourney, "is the prohibition of taking the life or shedding the blood of a fellow-creature, without sufficient cause, without

being forced into the necessity of it. This is one of the commandments which is most deeply stamped in the heart of man. But so soon as it is a question of war, that is, of shedding blood in torrents, men of the present day do not trouble themselves about a sufficient cause. Those who take part in wars do not even think of asking themselves whether there is any justification for these innumerable murders, whether they are justifiable or unjustifiable, lawful or unlawful, innocent or criminal; whether they are breaking that fundamental commandment that forbids killing without lawful cause. But their conscience is mute. War has ceased to be something dependent on moral considerations. In warfare men have in all the toil and dangers they endure no other pleasure than that of being conquerors, no sorrow other than that of being conquered. Don't tell me that they are serving their country. A great genius answered that long ago in the words that have become a proverb, 'Without justice, what is an empire but a great band of brigands?' And is not every band of brigands a little empire? They, too, have their laws; and they, too, make war to gain booty and even for honour.

"The aim of the proposed institution (the institution of an international board of arbitration) is that the nations of Europe may cease to be nations of robbers, and their

armies, bands of brigands. And one must add, not only brigands, but slaves. For our armies are simply gangs of slaves at the disposal of one or two commanders or ministers, who exercise a despotic control over them without any real responsibility, as we very well know.

"The peculiarity of a slave is that he is a mere tool in the hands of his master, a thing, not a man. That is just what soldiers, officers and generals are, going to murder and be murdered at the will of a ruler or rulers. Military slavery is an actual fact, and it is the worst form of slavery, especially now when by means of compulsory service it lays its fetters on the necks of all the strong and capable men of a nation, to make them instruments of murder, butchers of human flesh, for that is all they are taken and trained to do.

"The rulers, two or three in number, meet together in cabinets, secretly deliberate without registers, without publicity, and consequently without responsibility, and send men to be murdered."

"Protests against armaments, burdensome to the people, have not originated in our times," says Signor E. G. Moneta. "Hear what Montesquieu wrote in his day. 'France (and one might say, Europe) will be ruined by soldiers. A new plague is spreading throughout Europe. It attacks sovereigns

and forces them to maintain an incredible number of armed men. This plague is infectious and spreads, because directly one government increases its armament, all the others do likewise. So that nothing is gained by it but general ruin.

“Every government maintains as great an army as it possibly could maintain if its people were threatened with extermination, and people call peace this state of tension of all against all. And therefore Europe is so ruined that if private persons were in the position of the governments of our continent, the richest of them would not have enough to live on. We are poor, though we have the wealth and trade of the whole world.” That was written almost one hundred and fifty years ago. The picture seems drawn from the world of to-day. One thing only has changed —the form of government. In Montesquieu’s time it was said that the cause of the maintenance of great armaments was the despotic power of kings, who made war in the hope of augmenting by conquest their personal revenues and gaining glory. People used to say then: ‘Ah, if only people could elect those who would have the right to refuse governments the soldiers and the money—then there would be an end to military politics.’ Now there are representative governments in almost the whole of Europe, and in spite of that, war expenditures and

the preparations for war have increased to alarming proportions.

" It is evident that the insanity of sovereigns has gained possession of the ruling classes. War is not made now because one king has been wanting in civility to the mistress of another king, as it was in Louis XIV.'s time. But the natural and honourable sentiments of national honour and patriotism are so exaggerated, and the public opinion of one nation so excited against another, that it is enough for a statement to be made (even though it may be a false report) that the ambassador of one state was not received by the principal personage of another state to cause the outbreak of the most awful and destructive war there has ever been seen. Europe keeps more soldiers under arms to-day than in the time of the great Napoleonic wars. All citizens, with few exceptions, are forced to spend some years in barracks. Fortresses, arsenals, and ships are built, new weapons are constantly being invented to be replaced in a short time by fresh ones, for, sad to say, science, which ought always to be aiming at the good of humanity, assists in the work of destruction, and is constantly inventing new means for killing the greatest number of men in the shortest time. And to maintain so great a multitude of soldiers and to make such vast preparations for murder, hundreds of millions are spent annually, sums which would be

sufficient for the education of the people and for immense works of public utility, and which would make it possible to find a peaceful solution of the social question.

"Europe then is, in this respect, in spite of all the conquests of science, in the same position as in the darkest and most barbarous days of the Middle Ages. All deplore this state of things—neither peace nor war—and all would be glad to escape from it. The heads of governments all declare that they all wish for peace, and vie with one another in the most solemn protestations of peaceful intentions. But the same day or the next, they will lay a scheme for the increase of the armament before their legislative assembly, saying that these are the preventive measures they take for the very purpose of securing peace.

"But this is not the kind of peace we want. And the nations are not deceived by it. True peace is based on mutual confidence, while these huge armaments show open and utter lack of confidence, if not concealed hostility, between states. What should we say of a man who, wanting to show his friendly feelings for his neighbour, should invite him to discuss their differences with a loaded revolver in his hand?

"It is just this flagrant contradiction between the peaceful professions and the warlike policy of governments which all

good citizens desire to put an end to, at any cost."

People are astonished that every year there are 60,000 cases of suicide in Europe, and those only the recognised and recorded cases—and excluding Russia and Turkey; but one ought rather to be surprised that there are so few. Every man of the present day, if we go deep enough into the contradiction between his conscience and his life, is in a state of despair.

Not to speak of all the other contradictions between modern life and the conscience, the permanently armed condition of Europe together with its profession of Christianity is alone enough to drive any man to despair, to doubt of the sanity of mankind, and to terminate an existence in this senseless and brutal world. This contradiction, which is a quintessence of all the other contradictions, is so terrible, that to live and to take part in it is only possible if one does not think of it—if one is able to forget it.

What! all of us, Christians, not only profess to love one another, but do actually live one common life, we whose social existence beats with one common pulse, we aid one another, learn from one another, draw ever closer to one another to our mutual happiness, and find in this closeness the whole meaning of life! And to-morrow some crazy ruler will say some stupidity, and

another will answer in the same spirit, and then I must go, expose myself to being murdered, and murder men—who have done me no harm—and, more than that, whom I love. And this is not a remote contingency, but the very thing we are all preparing for, which is not only probable but an inevitable certainty.

To recognise this clearly is enough to drive a man out of his senses or to make him shoot himself. And this is just what does happen, and especially often among military men. A man need only come to himself for an instant to be impelled inevitably to such an end.

And this is the only explanation of the dreadful intensity with which men of modern times strive to stupefy themselves, with spirits, tobacco, opium, cards, reading newspapers, travelling, and all kinds of spectacles and amusements. These pursuits are followed up as an important, serious business. And, indeed, they are a serious business. If there were no external means of dulling their sensibilities, half of mankind would shoot themselves without delay, for to live in opposition to one's reason is the most intolerable condition. And that is the condition of all men of the present day. All men of the modern world exist in a state of continual and flagrant antagonism between their conscience and their way of life. This antagonism

it cannot even retard for a time the continual growth of a clearer recognition of what is wrong and therefore ought not to be. And therefore it would seem inevitable for Christian men to abandon the Pagan forms of society which they condemn, and to reconstruct their social existence on the Christian principles they profess.

So it would be, were it not for the law of inertia, as immutable a force in men and nations as in inanimate bodies. In men it takes the form of the psychological principle, so truly expressed in the words of the Gospel, "They have loved darkness better than light, because their deeds were evil." This principle shows itself in men not trying to recognise the truth, but to persuade themselves that the life they are leading, which is what they like and are used to, is a life perfectly consistent with truth.

Slavery was opposed to all the moral principles advocated by Plato and Aristotle, yet neither of them saw that, because to renounce slavery would have meant the break-up of the life they were living. We see the same thing in our modern world.

The division of men into two castes, as well as the use of force in government and war, are opposed to every moral principle professed by our modern society. Yet the cultivated and advanced men of the day seem not to see it.

The majority, if not all, of the cultivated men of our day try unconsciously to maintain the old social conception of life which justifies their position, and to hide from themselves and others its insufficiency, and above all the necessity of adopting the Christian conception of life which will mean the break-up of the whole existing social order. They struggle to keep up the organisation based on the social conception of life, but do not believe in it themselves, because it is extinct and it is impossible to believe in it.

All modern literature—philosophical, political, and artistic—is striking in this respect. What wealth of idea, of form, of colour, what erudition, what art, but what a lack of serious matter, what dread of any exactitude of thought or expression! Subtleties, allegories, humorous fancies, the widest generalisations, but nothing simple and clear, nothing going straight to the point, that is, to the problem of life.

But that is not all; besides these graceful frivolities, our literature is full of simple nastiness and brutality, of arguments which would lead men back in the most refined way to primæval barbarism, to the principles not only of the Pagan, but even of the animal life, which we have left behind us 5000 years ago.

And it could not be otherwise. In their dread of the Christian conception of life which

will destroy the social order, which some cling to only from habit, others also from interest, men cannot but be thrown back upon the Pagan conception of life and the principles based on it. Nowadays we see advocated not only patriotism and aristocratic principles just as they were advocated two thousand years ago, but even the coarsest epicureanism and animalism, only with this difference, that the men who then professed those views believed in them, whilst nowadays even the advocates of such views do not believe in them, for they have no meaning for the present day. No one can stand still when the earth is shaking under his feet. If we do not go forward we must go back. And, strange and terrible to say, the cultivated men of our day, the leaders of thought, are in reality with their subtle reasoning drawing society back, not to Paganism even, but to a state of primitive barbarism.

This tendency on the part of the leading thinkers of the day is nowhere more apparent than in their attitude to the phenomenon in which all the insufficiency of the social conception of life is presented in the most concentrated form—in their attitude, that is, to war, to the general arming of nations, and to universal compulsory service.

The undefined, if not disingenuous, attitude of modern thinkers to this phenomenon is striking. It takes three forms in culti-

vated society. One section look at it as an incidental phenomenon, arising out of the special political situation of Europe, and consider that this state of things can be reformed without a revolution in the whole internal social order of nations, by external measures of international diplomacy. Another section regard it as something cruel and hideous, but at the same time fated and inevitable like disease and death. A third party, with cool indifference, consider war as an inevitable phenomenon, beneficial in its effects and therefore desirable.

Men look at the subject from different points of view, but all alike talk of war as though it were something absolutely independent of the will of those who take part in it. And consequently they do not even admit the natural question which presents itself to every simple man: "How about me—ought I to take any part in it?" In their view no question of this kind even exists, and every man, however he may regard war from a personal standpoint, must slavishly submit to the requirements of the authorities on the subject.

The attitude of the first section of thinkers, those who see a way out of war in international diplomatic measures, is well expressed in the report of the last Peace Congress in London, and the articles and letters upon war that appeared in No. 8 of

Revue des Revues, 1891. The Congress, after gathering together from various quarters the verbal and written opinion of learned men, opened their proceedings by a religious service, and after listening to addresses for five whole days, concluded them by a public dinner and speeches. They adopted the following resolutions :

“ 1. The Congress affirms its belief that the brotherhood of man involves as a necessary consequence a brotherhood of nations.

“ 2. The Congress recognises the important influence that Christianity exercises on the moral and political progress of mankind, and earnestly urges upon ministers of the Gospel and other religious teachers the duty of setting forth the principles of peace and goodwill toward men. *And it recommends that the third Sunday in December be set apart for that purpose.*

“ 3. The Congress expresses the opinion that all teachers of history should call the attention of the young to the grave evils inflicted on mankind in all ages by war, and to the fact that such war has been waged for most inadequate causes.

“ 4. The Congress protests against the use of military drill in schools by way of physical exercise, and suggests the formation of brigades for saving life rather than of a quasi-military character ; and urges the desirability of impressing on the Board of Examiners

who formulate the questions for examination the propriety of guiding the minds of children in the principles of peace.

“5. The Congress holds that the doctrine of the Rights of Man requires that the aboriginal and weaker races, their territories and liberties, shall be guarded from injustice and fraud, and that these races shall be shielded against the vices so prevalent among the so-called advanced races of men. It further expresses its conviction that there should be concert of action among the nations for the accomplishment of these ends. The Congress expresses its hearty appreciation of the resolutions of the anti-slavery conference held recently at Brussels for the amelioration of the condition of the peoples of Africa.

“6. The Congress believes that the war-like prejudices and traditions which are still fostered in the various nationalities, and the misrepresentations by leaders of public opinion in legislative assemblies, or through the press, are often indirect causes of war, and that these evils should be counteracted by the publication of accurate information tending to the removal of misunderstanding between nations, and recommends the importance of considering the question of commencing an international newspaper with such a purpose.

“7. The Congress proposes to the Inter-Parliamentary Conference that the utmost support should be given to every project for

unification of weights and measures, coinage, tariff, postage, and telegraphic arrangements, &c., which would assist in constituting a commercial, industrial, and scientific union of the peoples.

"8. The Congress, in view of the vast social and moral influence of woman, urges upon every woman to sustain the things that make for peace, as otherwise she incurs grave responsibility for the continuance of the systems of militarism.

"9. The Congress expresses the hope that the Financial Reform Association and other similar societies in Europe and America should unite in considering means for establishing equitable commercial relations between states, by the reduction of import duties. The Congress feels that it can affirm that the whole of Europe desires peace, and awaits with impatience the suppression of armaments, which, under the plea of defence, become in their turn a danger by keeping alive mutual distrust, and are, at the same time, the cause of that general economic disturbance which stands in the way of settling in a satisfactory manner the problems of labour and poverty, which ought to take precedence of all others.

"10. The Congress, recognising that a general disarmament would be the best guarantee of peace and would lead to the solution of the questions which now most

divide states, expresses the wish that a Congress of representatives of all the states of Europe may be assembled as soon as possible to consider the means of effecting a gradual general disarmament.

" 11. The Congress, in consideration of the fact that the timidity of a single power might delay the convocation of the above-mentioned Congress, is of opinion that the government which should first dismiss any considerable number of soldiers would confer a signal benefit on Europe and mankind, because it would, by public opinion, oblige other governments to follow its example, and by the moral force of this accomplished fact would have increased rather than diminished the conditions of its national defence.

" 12. The Congress, considering the question of disarmament, as of peace in general, depends on public opinion, recommends the Peace Societies, as well as all friends of peace, to be active in its propaganda, especially at the time of parliamentary elections, in order that the electors should give their votes to candidates who are pledged to support Peace, Disarmament, and Arbitration.

" 13. The Congress congratulates the friends of peace on the resolution adopted by the International American Conference, held at Washington in April last, by which it was recommended that arbitration should be obligatory in all controversies whatever their

origin, except only those which may imperil the independence of one of the nations involved.

“ 14. The Congress recommends this resolution to the attention of European statesmen, and expresses the ardent desire that similar treaties may speedily be entered into between the other nations of the world.

“ 15. The Congress expresses its satisfaction at the adoption by the Spanish Senate on June 16 last of a project of law authorising the government to negotiate general or special treaties of arbitration for the settlement of all disputes except those relating to the independence or internal government of the states affected: also at the adoption of resolutions to a like effect by the Norwegian Storthing and by the Italian Chamber.

“ 16. The Congress resolves that a committee be appointed to address communications to the principal political, religious, commercial, and labour and peace organisations, requesting them to send petitions to the governmental authorities praying that measures be taken for the formation of suitable tribunals for the adjudication of international questions so as to avoid the resort to war.

“ 17. Seeing (1) that the object pursued by all Peace Societies is the establishment of judicial order between nations, and (2) that neutralisation by international treaties con-

stitutes a step towards this juridical state and lessens the number of districts in which war can be carried on :

“ The Congress recommends a larger extension of the rule of neutralisation and expresses the wish : (1) that all treaties which at present assure to certain states the benefit of neutrality remain in force, or, if necessary, be amended in a manner to render the neutrality more effective, either by extending neutralisation to the whole of the state, or by ordering the demolition of fortresses, which constitute rather a peril than a guarantee for neutrality ; (2) that new treaties in harmony with the wishes of the populations concerned be concluded for establishing the neutralisation of other states.

“ 18. The sub-committee proposes, (1) that the annual Peace Congress should be held either immediately before the meeting of the annual sub-parliamentary conference, or immediately after it in the same town ; (2) that the question of an international Peace Emblem be postponed *sine die* ; (3) that the following resolution be adopted :

“ a. To express satisfaction at the official overtures of the Presbyterian Church in the United States addressed to the highest representatives of each Church organisation in Christendom to unite in a general conference to promote the constitution of international arbitration for war.

"b. To express in the name of the Congress its profound reverence for the memory of Aurelio Saffi, the great Italian jurist, a member of the committee of the International League of Peace and Liberty.

"(4) That the memorial adopted by this Congress and signed by the President to the heads of the civilised states should, as far as practicable, be presented to each power by influential deputations.

"(5) That the following resolutions be adopted :

"a. A resolution of thanks to the Presidents of the various sittings of the Congress.

"b. A resolution of thanks to the Chairman, the Secretaries, and the members of the Bureau of the Congress.

"c. A resolution of thanks to the conveners and members of the Sectional Committees.

"d. A resolution of thanks to Rev. Canon Scott Holland, Rev. Dr. Reuen Thomas, and Rev. J. Morgan Gibbon for their pulpit addresses before the Congress, and also to the Authorities of St. Paul's Cathedral, the City Temple, and Stamford Hill Congregational Church, for the use of those buildings for public services.

"e. A letter of thanks to Her Majesty for permission to visit Windsor Castle.

"f. And also a resolution of thanks to the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, to Mr. Passmore Edwards, and other friends who

have extended their hospitality to the members of the Congress.

" 19. The Congress places on record a heartfelt expression of gratitude to Almighty God for the remarkable harmony and concord which have characterised the meetings of the Assembly, in which so many men and women of varied nations, creeds, tongues, and races have gathered in closest co-operation and for the conclusion of the labours of the Congress; and expresses its firm and unshaken belief in the ultimate triumph of the cause of Peace and of the principles advocated at these meetings."

The fundamental idea of the Congress is the necessity (1) of diffusing among all people by all means the conviction of the disadvantages of war and the great blessing of peace, and (2) of rousing governments to the sense of the superiority of international arbitration over war and of the consequent advisability and necessity of disarmament. To attain the first aim the Congress has recourse to teachers of history, to women, and to the clergy, with the advice to the latter to preach on the evil of war and the blessing of peace every third Sunday in December. To attain the second object, the Congress appeals to governments with the suggestion that they should disband their armies and replace war by arbitration.

To preach to men of the evil of war and the blessing of peace! But the blessing of

peace is so well known to men that, ever since there have been men at all, their best wish has been expressed in the greeting "Peace be with you." So why preach about it?

Not only Christians but Pagans, thousands of years ago, all recognised the evil of war and the blessing of peace. So that the recommendation to ministers of the Gospel to preach on the evil of war and the blessing of peace every third Sunday in December is quite superfluous.

The Christian cannot but preach on that subject every day of his life. If Christians and preachers of Christianity do not do so, there must be reasons for it. And until these have been removed no recommendations will be effective. Still less effective will be the recommendations to governments to disband their armies and replace them by international boards of arbitration. Governments, too, know very well the difficulty and the burdensomeness of raising and maintaining forces, and if in spite of that knowledge they do, at the cost of terrible strain and effort, raise and maintain forces, it is evident that they cannot do otherwise, and the recommendation of the Congress can never change it. But the learned gentlemen are unwilling to see that, and keep hoping to find a political combination through which governments shall be induced to limit their powers themselves. "Can we get rid of war?" asks a learned writer in the

Revue des Revues. "All are agreed that if it were to break out in Europe, its consequences would be like those of the great inroads of barbarians. The existence of whole nationalities would be at stake, and therefore the war would be desperate, bloody, atrocious.

"This consideration, together with the terrible engines of destruction invented by modern science, retards the moment of declaring war, and maintains the present temporary situation, which might continue for an indefinite period, except for the fearful cost of maintaining armaments which are exhausting the European states and threatening to reduce nations to a state of misery hardly less than that of war itself.

"Struck by this reflection, men of various countries have tried to find means for preventing, or at least for softening, the results of the terrible slaughter with which we are threatened.

"Such are the questions brought forward by the Peace Congress shortly to be held in Rome, and the publication of a pamphlet, 'Sur le Désarmement.'

"It is unhappily beyond doubt that with the present organisation of the majority of European states, isolated from one another and guided by distinct interests, the absolute suppression of war is an illusion with which it would be dangerous to cheat ourselves. Wiser rules and regulations imposed on these

duels between nations might, however, at least limit its horrors.

"It is equally chimerical to reckon on projects of disarmament, the execution of which is rendered almost impossible by considerations of a popular character present to the mind of all our readers. (This probably means that France cannot disband its army before taking its revenge.) Public opinion is not prepared to accept them, and moreover the international relations between different peoples are not such as to make their acceptance possible. Disarmament imposed on one nation by another in circumstances threatening its security would be equivalent to a declaration of war.

"However, one may admit that an exchange of ideas between the nations interested would aid, to a certain degree, in bringing about the good understanding indispensable to any negotiations, and would render possible a considerable reduction of the military expenditure which is crushing the nations of Europe and greatly hindering the solution of the social question, which each individually must solve on pain of having internal war as the price for escaping it externally.

"We might at least demand the reduction of the enormous expenses of war, organised as it is at present with a view to the power of invasion within twenty-four hours and a decisive battle within a week of the declaration of war.

"We ought to manage so that states could not make the attack suddenly and invade each other's territories within twenty-four hours."

This practical notion has been put forth by Maxime du Camp, and his article concludes with it.

The propositions of M. du Camp are as follows :

1. A diplomatic congress to be held every year.

2. No war to be declared till two months after the incident which provoked it. (The difficulty here would be to decide precisely what incident did provoke the war, since whenever war is declared there are very many such incidents, and one would have to decide from which to reckon the two months' interval.)

3. No war to be declared before it has been submitted to a plebiscitum of the nations preparing to take part in it.

4. No hostilities to be commenced till a month after the official declaration of war.

"No war to be declared. . . . No hostilities to be commenced, &c." But who is to arrange that no war is to be declared? Who is to compel people to do this and that? Who is to force states to delay their operations for a certain fixed time? All the other states. But all these others are also states which want holding in check and

keeping within limits, and forcing, too. Who is to force them, and how? Public opinion. But if there is a public opinion which can force governments to delay their operations for a fixed period, the same public opinion can force governments not to declare war at all.

But, it will be replied, there may be such a balance of power, such a *pondération de forces*, as would lead states to hold back of their own accord. Well, that has been tried, and is being tried even now. The Holy Alliance was nothing but that, the League of Peace was another attempt at the same thing, and so on.

But, it will be answered, suppose all were agreed. If all were agreed there would be no more war certainly, and no need for arbitration either.

"A court of arbitration! Arbitration shall replace war. Questions shall be decided by a court of arbitration. The Alabama question was decided by a court of arbitration, and the question of the Caroline islands was submitted to the decision of the Pope. Switzerland, Belgium, Denmark, and Holland have all declared that they prefer arbitration to war."

I daresay Monaco has expressed the same preference. The only unfortunate thing is that Germany, Russia, Austria, and France have not so far shown the same inclination.

It is amazing how men can deceive themselves when they find it necessary! Governments consent to decide their disagreements by arbitration and to disband their armies! The differences between Russia and Poland, between England and Ireland, between Austria and Bohemia, between Turkey and the Slavonic States, between France and Germany, to be soothed away by amiable conciliation!

One might as well suggest to merchants and bankers that they should sell nothing for a greater price than they gave for it, should undertake the distribution of wealth for no profit, and should abolish money as it would thus be rendered unnecessary.

But since commercial and banking operations consist in nothing but selling for more than the cost price, this would be equivalent to an invitation to suppress themselves. It is the same in regard to governments. To suggest to governments that they should not have recourse to violence, but should decide their misunderstandings in accordance with equity, is inviting them to abolish themselves as rulers, and that no government can ever consent to do.

The learned men form societies (there are more than a hundred such societies), assemble in Congresses (such as those recently held in London and Paris, and shortly to be held in Rome), deliver addresses, eat public dinners,

and make speeches, publish journals, and prove by every means possible that the nations forced to support millions of troops are strained to the furthest limits of their endurance; that the maintenance of these huge armed forces is in opposition to all the aims, the interests, and the wishes of the people; and that it is possible, moreover, by writing numerous papers, and uttering a great many words, to bring all men into agreement and to arrange so that they shall have no antagonistic interests, and then there will be no more war.

When I was a little boy, they told me if I wanted to catch a bird I must put salt on its tail. I ran after the birds with the salt in my hand, but I soon convinced myself that if I could put salt on a bird's tail, I could catch it, and realised that I had been hoaxed.

People ought to realise the same fact when they read books and articles on arbitration and disarmament.

If one could put salt on a bird's tail, it would be because it could not fly and there would be no difficulty in catching it. If the bird had wings and did not want to be caught, it would not let one put salt on its tail, because the speciality of a bird is to fly. In precisely the same way the speciality of government is not to obey, but to enforce obedience. And a government is only a

government so long as it can make itself obeyed, and therefore it always strives for that and will never willingly abandon its power. But since it is on the army that the power of government rests, it will never give up the army, and the use of the army in war.

The error arises from the learned jurists, deceiving themselves and others, by asserting that government is not what it really is, one set of men banded together to oppress another set of men, but, as shown by science, is the representation of the citizens in their collective capacity. They have so long been persuading other people of this that at last they have persuaded themselves of it; and thus they often seriously suppose that government can be bound by considerations of justice. But history shows that from Cæsar to Napoleon, and from Napoleon to Bismarck, government is in its essence always a force acting in violation of justice, and that it cannot be otherwise. Justice can have no binding force on a ruler or rulers who keep men, deluded and drilled, in readiness for acts of violence—soldiers, and by means of them control others. And so governments can never be brought to consent to diminish the number of these drilled slaves, who constitute their whole power and importance.

Such is the attitude of certain learned

men to the contradiction under which our society is being crushed, and such are their methods of solving it. Tell these people that the whole matter rests on the personal attitude of each man to the moral and religious question put nowadays to every one, the question, that is, whether it is lawful or unlawful for him to take his share of military service, and these learned gentlemen will shrug their shoulders and not condescend to listen or to answer you. The solution of the question in their idea is to be found in reading addresses, writing books, electing presidents, vice-presidents and secretaries, and meeting and speaking first in one town and then in another. From all this speechifying and writing it will come to pass according to their notions that governments will cease to levy the soldiers; on whom their whole strength depends, will listen to their discourses and will disband their forces, leaving themselves without any defence, not only against their neighbours, but also against their own subjects. As though a band of brigands, who have some unarmed travellers bound and ready to be plundered, should be so touched by their complaints of the pain caused by the cords they are fastened with, as to let them go again.

Still there are people who believe in this, busy themselves over peace congresses, read addresses, and write books. And govern

ments, we may be quite sure, express their sympathy and make a show of encouraging them. In the same way they pretend to support temperance societies, while they are living principally on the drunkenness of the people, and pretend to encourage education when their whole strength is based on ignorance ; and to support constitutional freedom, when their strength rests on the absence of freedom ; and to be anxious for the improvement of the condition of the working classes, when their very existence depends on their oppression; and to support Christianity, when Christianity destroys all government.

To be able to do this, they have long ago elaborated methods encouraging temperance, which cannot suppress drunkenness; methods of supporting education, which not only fail to prevent ignorance, but even increase it ; methods of aiming at freedom and constitutionalism, which are no hindrance to despotism ; methods of protecting the working classes, which will not free them from slavery ; and a Christianity, too, they have elaborated, which does not destroy but supports governments.

Now there is something more for the government to encourage—peace. The sovereigns, who nowadays take counsel with their ministers, decide by their will alone whether the butchery of millions is to be begun this year or next. They know very

well that all these discourses upon peace will not hinder them from sending millions of men to butchery when it seems good to them. They listen even with satisfaction to these discourses, encourage them, and take part in them.

All this far from being detrimental, is even of service to governments, by turning people's attention from the most important and pressing question : Ought or ought not each man called upon for military service, to submit to serve in the army ?

"Peace will soon be arranged, thanks to alliances and congresses, to books and pamphlets ; meantime go and put on your uniform, and prepare to cause suffering and to endure it for our benefit," is the government's line of argument. And the learned gentlemen who get up congresses and write articles are in perfect agreement with it.

This is the attitude of one set of thinkers. And since it is that most beneficial to governments, it is also the most encouraged by all intelligent governments.

Another attitude to war has something tragical in it. There are men who maintain that the love for peace and the inevitability of war form a hideous contradiction, and that such is the fate of man. These are mostly gifted and sensitive men, who see and realise all the horror and imbecility and cruelty of

war, but through some strange perversion of mind neither see nor seek to find any way out of this position, and seem to take pleasure in teasing the wound by dwelling on the desperate position of humanity. A notable example of such an attitude to war is to be found in the celebrated French writer, Guy de Maupassant. Looking from his yacht at the drill and firing practice of the French soldiers, the following reflections occur to him :

“ When I think only of this word war, a kind of terror seizes upon me, as though I were listening to some tale of sorcery, of the inquisition, some long past, remote abomination, monstrous, unnatural.

“ When cannibalism is spoken of, we smile with pride, proclaiming our superiority to these savages. Which are the savages, the real savages? Those who fight to eat the conquered, or those who fight to kill, for nothing but to kill?

“ The young recruits moving about in lines yonder, are destined to death like the flocks of sheep driven by the butcher along the road. They will fall in some plain with a sabre-cut in the head, or a bullet through the breast. And these are young men who might work, be productive and useful. Their fathers are old and poor. Their mothers who have loved them for twenty years, worshipped them as none but mothers can,

will learn in six months' time, or a year perhaps, that their son, their boy, the big boy reared with so much labour, so much expense, so much love, has been thrown in a hole like some dead dog, after being disembowelled by a bullet, and trampled, crushed, to a mass of pulp by the charges of cavalry. Why have they killed her boy, her handsome boy, her one hope, her pride, her life? She does not know. Ah, why?

"War! . . . fighting! . . . slaughter! . . . massacres of men! . . . And we have now, in our century, with our civilisation, with the spread of science, and the degree of philosophy which the genius of man is supposed to have attained, schools for training to kill, to kill very far off, to perfection, great numbers at once, to kill poor devils of innocent men with families, and without any kind of trial.

"And what is most bewildering is that the people do not rise against their governments. For what difference is there between monarchies and republics? The most bewildering thing is that the whole of society is not in revolt at the word—war.

"Ah! we shall always live under the burden of the ancient and odious customs, the criminal prejudices, the ferocious ideas of our barbarous ancestors, for we are beasts, and beasts we shall remain, dominated by instinct and changed by nothing. Would

not any other man than Victor Hugo have been exiled for that mighty cry of deliverance and truth? 'To-day force is called violence, and is being brought to judgment; war has been put on its trial. At the plea of the human race, civilisation arraigns warfare, and draws up the great list of crimes laid at the charge of conquerors and generals. The nations are coming to understand that the magnitude of a crime cannot be its extenuation; that if killing is a crime, killing many can be no extenuating circumstance; that if robbery is disgraceful, invasion cannot be glorious. Ah! let us proclaim these absolute truths, let us dishonour war!'

"Vain wrath," continues Maupassant, "a poet's indignation. War is held in more veneration than ever.

"A skilled proficient in that line, a slaughterer of genius, Von Moltke, in reply to the Peace delegates, once uttered these strange words:

"' War is holy, war is ordained of God. It is one of the most sacred laws of the world. It maintains among men all the great and noble sentiments; honour, devotion, virtue, and courage, and saves them, in short, from falling into the most hideous materialism.'

"So, then, bringing four hundred millions of men together into herds, marching by day and by night without rest, thinking of nothing, studying nothing, learning nothing, reading

nothing, being useful to no one, wallowing in filth, sleeping in mud, living like brutes in a continual state of stupefaction, sacking towns, burning villages, ruining whole populations, then meeting another mass of human flesh, falling upon them, making pools of blood, and plains of flesh mixed with trodden mire and red with heaps of corpses; having your arms or legs carried off, your brains blown out, for no advantage to any one, and dying in some corner of a field, whilst your old parents, your wife and children, are perishing of hunger—that is what is meant by not falling into the most hideous materialism!

“Warriors are the scourge of the world. We struggle against nature, and ignorance, and obstacles of all kinds to make our wretched life less hard. Learned men—benefactors of all—spend their lives in working, in seeking what can aid, what be of use, what can alleviate the lot of their fellows. They devote themselves unsparingly to their task of usefulness, making one discovery after another, enlarging the sphere of human intelligence, extending the bounds of science, adding each day some new store to the sum of knowledge, gaining each day prosperity, ease, strength for their country.

“War breaks out. In six months the generals have destroyed the work of twenty years of effort, of patience and of genius.

"That is what is meant by not falling into the most hideous materialism.

"We have seen it, war. We have seen men turned to brutes, frenzied, killing for fun, for terror, for bravado, for ostentation. Then when right is no more, law is dead, every notion of justice has disappeared, we have seen men shoot innocent creatures found on the road, and suspected because they were afraid. We have seen them kill dogs chained at their master's doors to try their new revolvers, we have seen them fire on cows lying in a field for no reason whatever, simply for the sake of shooting, for a joke.

"That is what is meant by not falling into the most hideous materialism.

"Going into a country, cutting the man's throat who defends his house because he wears a blouse and has not a military cap on his head, burning the dwellings of wretched beings who have nothing to eat, breaking furniture and stealing goods, drinking the wine found in the cellars, violating the women in the streets, burning thousands of francs worth of powder, and leaving misery and cholera in one's track.

"That is what is meant by not falling into the most hideous materialism.

"What have they done, those warriors, that proves the least intelligence? Nothing. What have they invented? Cannons and muskets. That is all.

"What remains to us from Greece? Books and statues. Is Greece great from her conquests or her creations?

"Was it the invasions of the Persians which saved Greece from falling into the most hideous materialism?

"Were the invasions of the barbarians what saved and regenerated Rome?

"Was it Napoleon I. who carried forward the great intellectual movement started by the philosophers of the end of last century?

"Yes, indeed, since government assumes the right of annihilating peoples thus, there is nothing surprising in the fact that the peoples assume the right of annihilating governments.

"They defend themselves. They are right. No one has an absolute right to govern others. It ought only to be done for the benefit of those who are governed. And it is as much the duty of any one who governs to avoid war as it is the duty of a captain of a ship to avoid shipwreck.

"When a captain has let his ship come to ruin, he is judged and condemned, if he is found guilty of negligence or even incapacity.

"Why should not the government be put on its trial after every declaration of war? *If the people understood that, if they themselves passed judgment on murderous governments, if they refused to let themselves be killed for nothing, if they would only turn their arms*

against those who have given them to them for massacre, on that day war would be no more. But that day will never come." *

The author sees all the horror of war. He sees that it is caused by governments forcing men by deception to go out to slaughter and be slain without any advantage to themselves. And he sees, too, that the men who make up the armies could turn their arms against the governments and bring them to judgment. But he thinks that that will never come to pass, and that there is, therefore, no escape from the present position. "I think war is terrible, but that it is inevitable; that compulsory military service is as inevitable as death, and that since government will always desire it, war will always exist."

So writes this talented and sincere writer, who is endowed with that power of penetrating to the innermost core of the subject, which is the essence of the poetic faculty. He brings before us all the cruelty of the inconsistency between men's moral sense and their actions, but, without trying to remove it, seems to admit that this inconsistency must exist and that it is the poetic tragedy of life.

Another no less gifted writer, Edouard Rod, paints in still more vivid colours the cruelty and madness of the present state of things. He, too, only aims at presenting its tragic

* "Sur l'Eau," pp. 71-80.

features, without suggesting or foreseeing any issue from the position.

“What is the good of doing anything? What is the good of undertaking any enterprise? And how, are we to love men in these troubled times when every fresh day is a menace of danger? . . . All we have begun, the plans we are developing, our schemes of work, the little good we may have been able to do, will it not all be swept away by the tempest that is in preparation? . . . Everywhere the earth is shaking under our feet, and storm-clouds are gathering on our horizon which will have no pity on us.

“Ah! if all we had to dread were the revolution which is held up as a spectre to terrify us! Since I cannot imagine a society more detestable than ours, I feel more sceptical than alarmed in regard to that which will replace it. If I should have to suffer from the change, I should be consoled by thinking that the executioners of that day were the victims of the previous time, and the hope of something better would help us to endure the worst. But it is not that remote peril which frightens me. I see another danger, nearer and far more cruel; more cruel because there is no excuse for it, because it is absurd, because it can lead to no good. Every day one balances the chances of war on the morrow, every day they become more merciless.

"The imagination revolts before the catastrophe which is coming at the end of our century as the goal of the progress of our era, and yet we must get used to facing it. For twenty years past, every resource of science has been exhausted in the invention of engines of destruction, and soon a few charges of cannon will suffice to annihilate a whole army. No longer a few thousands of poor devils, who were paid a price for their blood, are kept under arms, but whole nations are under arms to cut each other's throats. They are robbed of their time now (by compulsory service) that they may be robbed of their lives later. To prepare them for the work of massacre, their hatred is kindled by persuading them that they are hated. And peaceable men let themselves be played on thus, and go and fall on one another with the ferocity of wild beasts; furious troops of peaceful citizens taking up arms at an empty word of command, for some ridiculous question of frontiers or colonial trade interests, Heaven only knows what. . . . They will go like sheep to the slaughter, knowing all the while where they are going, knowing that they are leaving their wives, knowing that their children will want for food, full of misgivings, yet intoxicated by the fine-sounding lies that are dinned into their ears. *They will march without revolt, passive, resigned—though the numbers and the strength are theirs, and they might, if they knew how*

to co-operate together, establish the reign of good sense and fraternity, instead of the barbarous trickery of diplomacy. They will march to battle so deluded, so duped, that they will believe slaughter to be a duty, and will ask the benediction of God on their lust for blood. They will march to battle, trampling underfoot the harvests they have sown, burning the towns they have built—with songs of triumph, festive music, and cries of jubilation. And their sons will raise statues to those who have done most in their slaughter.

“ The destiny of a whole generation depends on the hour in which some ill-fated politician may give the signal that will be followed. We know that the best of us will be cut down and our work will be destroyed in embryo. *We know it and tremble with rage, but we can do nothing.* We are held fast in the toils of officialdom and red-tape, and too rude a shock would be needed to set us free. We are enslaved by the laws we set up for our protection, which have become our oppression. *We are but the tools of that autocratic abstraction, the state, which enslaves each individual in the name of the will of all, who would all, taken individually, desire exactly the opposite of what they will be made to do.*

“ And if it were only a generation that must be sacrificed! But there are graver interests at stake.

“ The paid politicians, the ambitious states-

men, who exploit the evil passions of the populace, and the imbeciles who are deluded by fine-sounding phrases, have so embittered national feuds, that the existence of a whole race will be at stake in the war of the morrow. One of the elements that constitute the modern world is threatened, the conquered people will be wiped out of existence, and, whichever it may be, we shall see a moral force annihilated, as if there were too many forces to work for good—we shall have a new Europe formed on foundations so unjust, so brutal, so sanguinary, stained with so monstrous a crime, that it cannot but be worse than the Europe of to-day—more iniquitous, more barbarous, more violent!

“Thus, one feels crushed under the weight of an immense discouragement. We are struggling in a *cul de sac* with muskets aimed at us from the house-tops. Our labour is like that of sailors executing their last task as the ship begins to sink. Our pleasures are those of the condemned victim, who is offered his choice of dainties a quarter of an hour before his execution. Thought is paralysed by anguish, and the most it is capable of is to calculate, interpreting the vague phrases of ministers, spelling out the sense of the speeches of sovereigns, and ruminating on the words attributed to diplomatists reported on the uncertain authority of the newspapers—whether it is to be to-morrow or the day

after, this year or the next, that we are to be murdered. So that one might seek in vain in history an epoch more insecure, more crushed under the weight of suffering."*

Here it is pointed out that the force is in the hands of those who work their own destruction, in the hands of the individual men who make up the masses; it is pointed out that the source of the evil is the government. It would seem evident that the contradiction between life and conscience had reached the limit beyond which it cannot go, and after reaching this limit some solution of it must be found.

But the author does not think so. He sees in this the tragedy of human life, and after depicting all the horror of the position, he concludes that human life must be spent in the midst of this horror.

So much for the attitude to war of those who regard it as something tragic and fated by destiny.

The third category consists of men who have lost all conscience and, consequently, all common sense and feeling of humanity.

To this category belongs Moltke, whose opinion has been quoted above by Maupassant and the majority of military men, who have been educated in this cruel superstition, live by it, and consequently are often in all simplicity convinced that war is not only an

* "Le Sens de la Vie," pp. 208-213.

inevitable, but even a necessary and beneficial thing. This is also the view of some civilians, so-called educated and cultivated people.

Here is what the celebrated Academician, Camille Doucet, writes in reply to the editor of the *Revue des Revues*, where several letters on war were published together :

“ DEAR SIR,—

“ When you ask the least warlike of Academicians whether he is a partisan of war, his answer is known beforehand.

“ Alas! Sir, you yourself speak of the pacific ideal inspiring your generous compatriots as a dream.

“ During my life, I have heard a great many good people protest against this frightful custom of international butchery, which all admit and deplore; but how is it to be remedied?

“ Often, too, there have been attempts to suppress duelling, one would fancy that seemed an easy task: but not at all! All that has been done hitherto with that noble object has never been, and never will be, of use.

“ All the Congresses of both hemispheres may vote against war, and against duelling too, but above all arbitrations, conventions, and legislations there will always be the *personal honour of individual men*, which has

always demanded duelling, and *the interests of nations* which will always demand war.

"I wish none the less from the depths of my heart that the Congress of Universal Peace may succeed at last in its very honourable and difficult enterprise.

"I am, dear Sir, &c.,

"CAMILLE DOUCET."

The upshot of this is that personal honour requires men to fight, and the interests of nations require them to ruin and exterminate each other. As for the efforts to abolish war, they call for nothing but a smile.

The opinion of another well-known Academician, Jules Claretie, is of the same kind.

"Dear Sir," he writes, "for a man of sense there can be but one opinion on the subject of peace and war.

"Humanity is created to live, to live free, to perfect and ameliorate its fate by peaceful labour. The general harmony preached by the Universal Peace Congress is but a dream, perhaps, but at least it is the fairest of all dreams. Man is always looking towards the Promised Land, and there the harvests are to ripen with no fear of their being torn up by shells or crushed by cannon wheels. . . . But! Ah! but—! since philosophers and philanthropists are not the controlling powers, it is well for our soldiers to guard our frontier and homes, and their arms, skilfully used, are

perhaps the surest guarantee of the peace we all love.

"Peace is a gift only granted to the strong and the resolute.

"I am, dear Sir, &c.,
"JULES CLARETIE."

The upshot of this letter is that there is no harm in talking about what no one intends or feels obliged to do. But when it comes to practice, we must fight.

And here now is the view lately expressed by the most popular novelist in Europe, Emile Zola :

"I regard war as a fatal necessity, which appears inevitable for us from its close connection with human nature and the whole constitution of the world. I should wish that war could be put off for the longest possible time. Nevertheless, the moment will come when we shall be forced to go to war. I am considering it at this moment from the standpoint of universal humanity, and making no reference to our misunderstanding with Germany—a most trivial incident in the history of mankind. I say that war is necessary and beneficial, since it seems one of the conditions of existence for humanity. War confronts us everywhere, not only war between different races and peoples, but war, too, in private and family life. It seems one

is disagreeable, no doubt ; but the laws of the world are not made for our pleasure, they are made for our progress. Let us enter this inevitable, necessary palace of war ; we shall be able to observe there how the most tenacious of our instincts, without losing any of its vigour, is transformed and adapted to the varying exigencies of historical epochs."

M. de Vogué finds the necessity for war, according to his views, well expressed by the two great writers, Joseph de Maistre and Darwin, whose statements he likes so much that he quotes them again.

" Dear Sir," he writes to the editor of the *Revue des Revues*, " you ask me my view as to the possible success of the Universal Congress of Peace. I hold with Darwin that violent struggle is a law of nature which overrules all other laws ; I hold with Joseph de Maistre that it is a divine law ; two different ways of describing the same thing. If by some impossible chance a fraction of human society—all the civilised West, let us suppose—were to succeed in suspending the action of this law, some races of stronger instincts would undertake the task of putting it into action against us : those races would vindicate nature's reasoning against human reason ; they would be successful, because the certainty of peace—I do not say *peace*, I say *the certainty of peace*—would, in half a century, engender a corruption

and a decadence more destructive for mankind than the worst of wars. I believe that we must do with war—the criminal law of humanity—as with all our criminal laws, that is, soften them, put them in force as rarely as possible; use every effort to make their application unnecessary. But all the experience of history teaches us that they cannot be altogether suppressed so long as two men are left on earth, with bread, money, and a woman between them.

“I should be very happy if the Congress would prove me in error. But I doubt if it can prove history, nature, and God in error also.

“I am, dear Sir, &c.,
E. M. DE VOGÜÉ.”

This amounts to saying that history, human nature, and God show us that so long as there are two men and bread, money and a woman—there will be war. That is to say, that no progress will lead men to rise above the savage conception of life, which regards no participation of bread, money (money is good in this context) and woman possible without fighting.

They are strange people, these men who assemble in Congresses, and make speeches to show us how to catch birds by putting salt on their tails, though they must know it is impossible to do it. And amazing are they,

too, who, like Maupassant, Rod, and others, see clearly all the horror of war, the inconsistency of men not doing what is needful, right, and beneficial for them to do, who lament over the tragedy of life, and not see that the whole tragedy is at an end, directly men, ceasing to take account of unnecessary considerations, refuse to do what is hateful and disastrous to them. They are not amazing people truly, but those who, like de Vogüé and others, professing the doctrine of evolution, regard war as not only inevitable, but beneficial, and therefore desirable—they are terrible, hideous, in their moral perversion. The others, at least, believe that they hate evil and love good, but the former openly declare that good and evil do not exist.

All discussion of the possibility of establishing peace instead of everlasting war, is pernicious sentimentalism of phrase among them. There is a law of evolution by which it follows that I must live and act in an evil way, and what is to be done? I am an educated man, I know the law of evolution, and therefore I will act in an evil way. "Entrons au pas de la guerre." There is the law of evolution, and therefore there is neither good nor evil, and one must live for the sake of one's personal existence, leaving the rest to the act of the law of evolution. This is the last word of refined culture, and with it of that over-

shadowing of conscience which has come upon the educated classes of our times. The desire of the educated classes to support the ideas they prefer, and the order of existence based on them, has attained its furthest limits. They lie, and delude themselves and one another, with the subtlest forms of deception, simply to obscure, to deaden conscience.

Instead of transforming their life into harmony with their conscience, they try by every means to stifle its voice. But it is in darkness that the light begins to shine, and so the light is rising upon our epoch.

CHAPTER VII

SIGNIFICANCE OF COMPULSORY SERVICE

Universal compulsory service is not a political accident, but the furthest limit of the contradiction inherent in the social conception of life—Origin of authority in society—Basis of authority is physical violence—To be able to perform its acts of violence authority needs a special organisation—The army—Authority, that is, violence, is the principle which is destroying the social conception of life—Attitude of authority to the masses, that is, attitude of government to working oppressed classes—Governments try to foster in working classes the idea that state-force is necessary to defend them from external enemies—But the army is principally needed to preserve government from its own subjects—The working classes—Speech of M. de Caprivi—All privileges of ruling classes based on violence—The increase of armies up to point of universal service—Universal compulsory service destroys all the advantages of social life, which government is intended to preserve—Compulsory service is the furthest limit of submission, since in name of the state it requires sacrifice of all that can be precious to a man—Is government necessary?—The sacrifices demanded by government in compulsory service have no longer any reasonable basis—And there is more advantage to be gained by not submitting to the demands of the state than by submitting to them.

EDUCATED people of the upper classes are trying to stifle the ever-growing sense of the necessity of transforming the existing social order. But life, which goes on growing more

complex, and developing in the same direction, and increases the inconsistencies and the sufferings of men, brings them to the limit beyond which they cannot go. This furthest limit of inconsistency is universal compulsory military service.

It is usually supposed that universal military service and the increased armaments connected with it, as well as the resulting increase of taxes and national debts, is a passing phenomenon, produced by the particular political situation of Europe, and that it may be removed by certain political combinations without any modification of the inner order of life.

This is absolutely incorrect. Universal military service is only the internal inconsistency inherent in the social conception of life, carried to its furthest limits, and becoming evident when a certain stage of material development is reached.

The social conception of life, we have seen, consists in the transfer of the aim of life from the individual to groups and their maintenance—to the tribe, family, race or state.

In the social conception of life it is supposed that since the aim of life is found in groups of individuals, individuals will voluntarily sacrifice their own interests for the interests of the group. And so it has been, and still is, in fact, in certain groups, the dis-

inction being that they are the most primitive forms of association in the family or tribe, or race, or even in the patriarchal state. Through tradition handed down by education and supported by religious sentiment, individuals without compulsion merged their interests in the interests of the group, and sacrificed their own good for the general welfare.

But the more complex and the larger societies become, and especially the more often conquest becomes the cause of the amalgamation of people into a state, the more often individuals strive to attain their own aims at the public expense, and the more often it becomes necessary to restrain these insubordinate individuals by recourse to authority, that is, to violence. The champions of the social conception of life usually try to connect the idea of authority, that is, of violence, with the idea of moral influence, but this connection is quite impossible.

The effect of moral influence on a man is to change his desires and to bend them in the direction of the duty required of him. The man who is controlled by moral influence acts in accordance with his own desires. Authority in the sense in which the word is ordinarily understood, is a means of forcing a man to act in opposition to his desires. The man who submits to authority does not do as he chooses, but as he is obliged by

authority. Nothing can oblige a man to do what he does not choose except physical force, or the threat of it—that is, deprivation of freedom, blows, imprisonment, or threats—easily carried out—of such punishments. This is what authority consists of and always has consisted of.

In spite of the unceasing efforts of those who happen to be in authority to conceal this and attribute some other significance to it, authority has always meant for man the cord, the chain, with which he is bound and fettered, or the knout with which he is to be flogged, or the axe with which he is to have hands, ears, nose or head cut off, or, at the very least, the threat of these terrors. So it was under Nero and Ghenghis Khan, and so it is to-day, even under the most liberal government in the Republics of the United States or of France. If men submit to authority, it is only because they are liable to these punishments in case of non-submission. All state obligations, payment of taxes, fulfilment of state duties, and submission to punishments, exile, fines, &c., to which people appear to submit voluntarily, are always based on bodily violence or the threat of it.

The basis of authority is bodily violence. The possibility of applying bodily violence to people is provided above all by an organisation of armed men, trained to act in

unison in submission to one will. These bands of armed men submissive to a single will, are what constitute the army. The army has always been, and still is, the basis of power. Power is always in the hands of those who control the army, and all men in power—from the Roman Cæsars to the Russian and German Emperors—take more interest in their army than in anything, and court popularity in the army, knowing that if that is on their side their power is secure.

The formation and aggrandisement of the army, indispensable to the maintenance of authority, is what has introduced into the social conception of life the principle that is destroying it.

The object of authority and the justification for its existence lies in the restraint of those who aim at attaining their personal interests to the detriment of the interests of society.

But however power has been gained, those who possess it are in no way different from other men, and therefore no more disposed than others to subordinate their own interests to those of the society. On the contrary, having the power to do so at their disposal, they are more disposed than others to subordinate the public interests to their own. Whatever means men have devised for preventing those in authority from overriding public interests for their own benefit, or for entrusting power only to the most faultless

people, they have not so far succeeded in either of those aims.

All the methods of appointing authorities that have been tried, divine right, and election, and heredity, and balloting, and assemblies and parliaments and senates—have all proved ineffectual. Every one knows that not one of these methods attains the aim either of entrusting power only to the incorruptible, or of preventing power from being abused. Every one knows, on the contrary, that men in authority—be they emperors, ministers, governors, or police-officers—are always, simply from the possession of power, more liable to be demoralised, that is, to subordinate public interests to their personal aims, than those who have not the power to do so. Indeed, it could not be otherwise.

The state conception of life could be justified only so long as all men voluntarily sacrificed their personal interests to the public welfare. But so soon as there were individuals who would not voluntarily sacrifice their own interests, and authority, that is, violence, was needed to restrain them, then the disintegrating principle of the coercion of one set of people by another set, entered into the social conception of the organisation based on it.

For the authority of one set of men over another to attain its object of restraining those who override public interests for their personal ends, power ought only to be put

into the hands of the impeccable, as it is supposed to be among the Chinese, and as it was supposed to be in the Middle Ages, and is even now supposed to be by those who believe in the consecration by anointing. Only under those conditions could the social organisation be justified.

But since this is not the case, and, on the contrary, men in power are always far from being saints, through the very fact of their possession of power, the social organisation based on power has no justification.

Even if there was once a time when, owing to the low standard of morals, and the disposition of men to violence, the existence of an authority to restrain such violence was an advantage, because the violence of government was less than the violence of individuals, one cannot but see that this advantage could not be lasting. As the disposition of individuals to violence diminished, and as the habits of the people became more civilised, and as power grew more demoralised through lack of restraint, this advantage disappeared.

The whole history of the last two thousand years is nothing but the history of this gradual change of relation between the moral development of the masses on the one hand, and the demoralisation of governments on the other.

This, put simply, is how it has come to pass.

Men lived in families, tribes, and races, at

feud with one another, plundering, outraging, and killing one another. These violent hostilities were carried on on a large and on a small scale: man against man, family against family, tribe against tribe, race against race, and people against people. The larger and stronger groups conquered and absorbed the weaker, and the larger and stronger they became, the more internal feuds disappeared and the more the continuity of the group seemed assured.

The members of a family or tribe, united into one community, are less hostile among themselves, and families and tribes do not die like one man, but have a continuity of existence. Between the members of one state, subject to a single authority, the strife between individuals seems still less and the life of the state seems even more secure.

Their association into larger and larger groups was not the result of the conscious recognition of the benefits of such associations, as it is said to be in the story of the Varyagi. It was produced on one hand by the natural growth of population, and on the other by struggle and conquest.

After conquest, the power of the emperor puts an end to internal dissensions, and so the state conception of life justifies itself. But this justification is never more than temporary. Internal dissensions disappear only in proportion to the degree of oppres-

sion exerted by the authority over the dissentient individuals. The violence of internal feud crushed by authority reappears in authority itself, which falls into the hands of men who, like the rest, are frequently or always ready to sacrifice the public welfare to their personal interest, with the difference that their subjects cannot resist them, and thus they are exposed to all the demoralising influence of authority. And thus the evil of violence, when it passes into the hands of authority, is always growing and growing, and in time becomes greater than the evil it is supposed to suppress, while, at the same time, the tendency to violence in the members of the society becomes weaker and weaker, so that the violence of authority is less and less needed.

Government authority, even if it does suppress private violence, always introduces into the life of men fresh forms of violence, which tend to become greater and greater in proportion to the duration and strength of the government.

So that though the violence of power is less noticeable in government than when it is employed by members of society against one another, because it finds expression in submission and not in strife, it nevertheless exists and often to a greater degree than in former days.

And it could not be otherwise, since, apart

from the demoralising influence of power, the policy or even the unconscious tendency of those in power will always be to reduce their subjects to the extreme of weakness, for the weaker the oppressed, the less effort need be made to keep him in subjection.

And therefore the oppression of the oppressed always goes on growing up to the furthest limit beyond which it cannot go without killing the goose with the golden eggs. And if the goose lays no more eggs, like the American Indians, negroes and Fijians, then it is killed in spite of the sincere protests of philanthropists.

The most convincing example of this is to be found in the condition of the working classes of our epoch, who are in reality no better than the slaves of ancient times subdued by conquest.

In spite of the pretended efforts of the higher classes to ameliorate the position of the workers, all the working classes of the present day are kept down by the inflexible iron law by which they only get just what is barely necessary, so that they are forced to work without ceasing while still retaining strength enough to labour for their employers, who are really those who have conquered and enslaved them.

So it has always been. In ratio to the duration and increasing strength of authority

its advantages for its subjects disappear and its disadvantages increase.

And this has been so, independently of the forms of government under which nations have lived. The only difference is that under a despotic form of government the authority is concentrated in a small number of oppressors and violence takes a cruder form; under constitutional monarchies and republics, as in France and America, authority is divided among a great number of oppressors and the forms assumed by violence are less crude, but its effect of making the disadvantages of authority greater than its advantages and of enfeebling the oppressed to the furthest extreme to which they can be reduced with advantage to the oppressors, remains always the same.

Such has been, and still is, the condition of all the oppressed, but hitherto they have not recognised the fact. In the majority of instances they have believed in all simplicity that governments exist for their benefit, that they would be lost without a government; that the very idea of living without a government is a blasphemy which one hardly dare put into words; that this is the—for some reason terrible—doctrine of anarchism, with which a mental picture of all kinds of horrors is associated.

People have believed as though it were something fully proved, and so needing no

proof, that since all nations have hitherto developed in the form of states, that form of organisation is an indispensable condition of the development of humanity.

And in that way it has lasted for hundreds and thousands of years, and governments—those who happened to be in power—have tried it, and are now trying more zealously than ever to keep their subjects in this error.

So it was under the Roman emperors and so it is now. In spite of the fact that the sense of the uselessness and even injurious effects of state violence is more and more penetrating into men's consciousness, things might have gone on in the same way for ever if governments were not under the necessity of constantly increasing their armies in order to maintain their power.

It is generally supposed that governments strengthen their forces only to defend the state from other states, in oblivion of the fact that armies are necessary, before all things, for the defence of governments from their own oppressed and enslaved subjects.

That has always been necessary, and has become more and more necessary with the increased diffusion of education among the masses, with the improved communication between people of the same and of different nationalities. It has become particularly indispensable now in the face of communism, socialism, anarchism, and the labour move-

ment generally. Governments feel that it is so, and strengthen the force of their disciplined armies.*

In the German Reichstag not long ago, in reply to a question why funds were needed for raising the salaries of the under-officers, the German Chancellor openly declared that trustworthy under-officers were necessary to contend against socialism. Caprivi only said aloud what every statesman knows and assiduously conceals from the people. The reason to which he gave expression is essentially the same as that which made the French kings and the Popes engage Swiss and Scotch guards, and makes the Russian authorities of to-day so carefully distribute the recruits, so that the regiments from the frontiers are stationed in central districts, and the regiments from the centre are stationed on the frontiers. The meaning of Caprivi's speech, put into plain language, is that funds are needed, not to

* The fact that in America the abuses of authority exist in spite of the small number of their troops, not only fails to disprove this position, but positively confirms it. In America there are fewer soldiers than in other states. That is why there is nowhere else so little oppression of the working classes, and no country where the end of the abuses of government and of government itself seems so near. Of late as the combinations of labourers gain in strength, one hears more and more frequently the cry raised for the increase of the army, though the United States are not threatened with any attack from without. The upper classes know that an army of 50,000 will soon be insufficient, and no longer relying on Pinkerton's men, they feel that the security of their position depends on the increased strength of the army.

resist foreign foes, but to *buy under-officers* to be ready to act against the enslaved toiling masses.

Caprivi incautiously gave utterance to what every one knows perfectly well, or at least feels vaguely if he does not recognise it, that is, that the existing order of life is as it is, not, as would be natural and right, because the people wish it to be so, but because it is so maintained by state violence, by the army with its *bought under-officers* and generals.

If the labourer has no land, if he cannot use the natural right of every man to derive subsistence for himself and his family out of the land, that is not because the people wish it to be so, but because a certain set of men, the landowners, have appropriated the right of giving or refusing admittance to the land to the labourers. And this abnormal order of things is maintained by the army. If the immense wealth produced by the labour of the working classes is not regarded as the property of all, but as the property of a few exceptional persons ; if labour is taxed by authority and the taxes spent by a few on what they think fit ; if strikes on the part of labourers are repressed, while on the part of capitalists they are encouraged ; if certain persons appropriate the right of choosing the form of the education, religious and secular, of children, and certain persons monopolise

the right of making the laws, all must obey, and so dispose of the lives and properties of other people—all this is not done because the people wish it and because it is what is natural and right, but because the government and ruling classes wish this to be so for their own benefit, and insist on its being so even by physical violence.

Every one, if he does not recognise this now, will know that it is so at the first attempt at insubordination or at a revolution of the existing order.

Armies, then, are needed by governments and by the ruling classes, above all, to support the present order, which, far from being the result of the people's needs, is often in direct antagonism to them, and is only beneficial to the government and ruling classes.

To keep their subjects in oppression and to be able to enjoy the fruits of their labour the government must have armed forces.

But there is not only one government. There are other governments, exploiting their subjects by violence in the same way, and always ready to pounce down on any other government and carry off the fruits of the toil of its enslaved subjects. And so every government needs an army also to protect its booty from its neighbour brigands. Every government is thus involuntarily reduced to the necessity of emulating one another in the increase of their armies. This

increase is contagious, as Montesquieu pointed out one hundred and fifty years ago.

Every increase in the army of one state, with the aim of self-defence against its subjects, becomes a source of danger for neighbouring states and calls for a similar increase in their armies.

The armed forces have reached their present number of millions, not only through the menace of danger from neighbouring states, but principally through the necessity of subduing every effort at revolt on the part of the subjects.

Both causes, mutually dependent, contribute to the same result at once; troops are required against internal forces and also to keep up a position with other states. One is the result of the other. The despotism of a government always increases with the strength of the army and its external successes, and the aggressiveness of a government increases with its internal despotism.

The rivalry of the European states in constantly increasing their forces has reduced them to the necessity of having recourse to universal military service, since by that means the greatest possible number of soldiers is obtained at the least possible expense. Germany first hit on this device. And directly one state adopted it the others were obliged to do the same. And by this means all citizens are under arms to support

the iniquities practised upon them; all citizens have become their own oppressors.

Universal military service was an inevitable logical necessity, to which we were bound to come. But it is also the last expression of the inconsistency inherent in the social conception of life, when violence is needed to maintain it. This inconsistency has become obvious in universal military service. In fact, the whole significance of the social conception of life consists in man's recognition of the barbarity of strife between individuals, and the transitoriness of personal life itself, and the transference of the aim of life to groups of persons. But with universal military service it comes to pass that men, after making every sacrifice to get rid of the cruelty of strife and the insecurity of existence, are called upon to face all the perils they had meant to avoid. And in addition to this the state, for whose sake individuals renounced their personal advantages, is exposed again to the same risks of insecurity and lack of permanence as the individual himself was in previous times.

Governments were to give men freedom from the cruelty of personal strife and security in the permanence of the state-order of existence. But instead of doing that, they expose the individual to the same necessity of strife, substituting strife with individuals of other states for strife with neighbours.

And the danger of destruction for the individual, and the state too, they leave just as it was.

Universal military service may be compared to the efforts of a man to prop up his falling house, who so surrounds it and fills it with props, and buttresses, and planks, and scaffolding, that he manages to keep the house standing only by making it impossible to live in it.

In the same way universal military service destroys all the benefits of the social order of life which it is employed to maintain.

The advantages of social organisation are security of property and labour and associated action for the improvement of existence—universal military service destroys all this.

The taxes raised from the people for war preparations absorb the greater part of the produce of labour which the army ought to defend.

The withdrawing of all men from the ordinary course of life destroys the possibility of labour itself. The danger of war, ever ready to break out, renders all reforms of social life vain and fruitless.

In former days, if a man were told that if he did not acknowledge the authority of the state, he would be exposed to attack from enemies, domestic and foreign, that he would have to resist them alone, and would be

liable to be killed, and that therefore it would be to his advantage to put up with some hardships to secure himself from these calamities, he might well believe it, seeing that the sacrifices he made to the state were only partial and gave him the hope of a tranquil existence in a permanent state. But now, when the sacrifices have been increased ten-fold and the promised advantages are disappearing, it would be a natural reflection that submission to authority is absolutely uselsss.

But the fatal significance of universal military service, as the manifestation of the contradiction inherent in the social conception of life, is not only apparent in that. The greatest manifestation of this contradiction consists in the fact that every citizen in being made a soldier becomes a prop of the government organisation, and shares the responsibility of everything the government does, even though he may not admit its legitimacy.

Governments assert that armies are needed above all for external defence, but that is not true. They are needed principally against their subjects, and every man, under universal military service, becomes an accomplice in all the acts of violence of the government against the citizens without any choice of his own.

To convince oneself of this, one need only remember what things are done in every

state, in the name of order and the public welfare, of which the execution always falls to the army. All civil outbreaks for dynastic or other party reasons, all the executions that follow on such disturbances, all repression of insurrections, and military intervention to break up meetings and to suppress strikes, all forced extortion of taxes, all the iniquitous distributions of land, all the restrictions on labour—are either carried out directly by the military or by the police with the army at their back. Any one who serves his time in the army shares the responsibility of all these things, about which he is, in some cases, dubious, while very often they are directly opposed to his conscience. People are unwilling to be turned out of the land they have cultivated for generations, or they are unwilling to disperse when the government authority orders them, or they are unwilling to pay the taxes required of them, or to recognise laws as binding on them when they have had no hand in making them, or to be deprived of their nationality—and I, in the fulfilment of my military duty, must go and shoot them for it. How can I help asking myself, when I take part in such punishments, whether they are just, and whether I ought to assist in carrying them out?

Universal service is the extreme limit of violence necessary for the support of the whole state-organisation, and it is the

extreme limit to which submission on the part of the subjects can go. It is the key-stone of the whole edifice, and its fall will bring it all down.

The time has come when the ever-growing abuse of power by governments and their struggles with one another has led to their demanding such material, and even moral, sacrifices from their subjects that every one is forced to reflect and ask himself, "Can I make these sacrifices? And for the sake of what am I making them? I am expected for the sake of the state to make these sacrifices, to renounce everything that can be precious to man—peace, family, security, and human dignity. What is this state, for whose sake such terrible sacrifices have to be made? And why is it so indispensably necessary? "The state," they tell us, "is indispensably needed, in the first place, because without it we should not be protected against the attacks of evil-disposed persons; and, secondly, except for the state we should be savages and should have neither religion, culture, education, nor commerce, nor means of communication, nor other social institutions; and, thirdly, without the state to defend us we should be liable to be conquered and enslaved by neighbouring peoples."

"Except for the state," they say, "we should be exposed to the attacks of evil-disposed persons in our own country."

But who are these evil-disposed persons in our midst from whose attacks we are preserved by the state and its army? Even if, three or four centuries ago, when men prided themselves on their warlike prowess, when killing men was considered an heroic achievement, there were such persons; we know very well that there are no such persons now, that we do not nowadays carry or use firearms, but every one professes humane principles and feels sympathy for his fellows, and wants nothing more than we all do—that is, to be left in peace to enjoy his existence undisturbed. So that nowadays there are no special malefactors from whom the state could defend us. If by these evil-disposed persons is meant the men who are punished as criminals, we know very well that they are not a different kind of being like wild beasts among sheep, but are men just like ourselves, and no more naturally inclined to crimes than those against whom they commit them. We know now that threats and punishments cannot diminish their number; that that can only be done by change of environment and moral influence. So that the justification of state violence on the ground of the protection it gives us from evil-disposed persons, even if it had some foundation three or four centuries ago, has none whatever now. At present one would rather say, on the contrary, that the action of the state with its

cruel methods of punishment, behind the general moral standard of the age, such as prisons, galleys, gibbets, and guillotines, tends rather to brutalise the people than to civilise them, and consequently rather to increase than diminish the number of malefactors.

"Except for the state," they tell us, "we should not have any religion, education, culture, means of communication, and so on. Without the state men would not have been able to form the social institutions needed for doing anything." This argument, too, was well-founded only some centuries ago.

If there was a time when people were so disunited, when they had so little means of communication and interchange of ideas, that they could not co-operate and agree together in any common action in commerce, economics or education, without the state as a centre, this want of common action exists no longer. The great extension of means of communication and interchange of ideas has made men completely able to dispense with state aid in forming societies, associations, corporations and congresses for scientific, economic, and political objects. Indeed, government is more often an obstacle than an assistance in attaining these aims.

From the end of last century there has hardly been a single progressive movement of humanity which has not been retarded by the government. So it has been with aboli-

tion of corporal punishment, of trial by torture and of slavery, as well as with the establishment of the liberty of the press and the right of public meeting. In our day governments not only fail to encourage, but directly hinder every movement by which people try to work out new forms of life for themselves. Every attempt at the solution of the problems of labour, land, politics and religion meets with direct opposition on the part of government.

"Without governments nations would be enslaved by their neighbours." It is scarcely necessary to refute this last argument. It carries its refutation on the face of it. The government, they tell us, with its army is necessary to defend us from neighbouring states who might enslave us. But we know this is what all governments say of one another, and yet we know that all the European nations profess the same principles of liberty and fraternity, and therefore stand in no need of protection against one another. And if defence against barbarous nations is meant, one-thousandth part of the troops now under arms would be amply sufficient for that purpose. We see that it is really the very opposite of what we have been told. The power of the state, far from being a security against the attacks of our neighbours, exposes us, on the contrary, to much greater danger of such attacks. So that every man who is led,

through his compulsory service in the army, to reflect on the value of the state, for whose sake he is expected to be ready to sacrifice his peace, security and life, cannot fail to perceive that there is no kind of justification in modern times for such a sacrifice.

And it is not only from the theoretical standpoint that every man must see that the sacrifices demanded by the state have no justification. Even looking at it practically, weighing, that is to say, all the burdens laid on him by the state, no man can fail to see that for him personally to comply with state demands and serve in the army, would, in the majority of cases, be more disadvantageous than to refuse to do so.

If the majority of men choose to submit rather than to refuse, it is not the result of sober balancing of advantages and disadvantages, but because they are induced by a kind of hypnotising process practised upon them. In submitting they simply yield to the suggestions given them as orders, without thought or effort of will. To resist would need independent thought and effort, of which every man is not capable. Even apart from the moral significance of compliance or non-compliance, considering material advantage only, non-compliance will be more advantageous in general.

Whoever I may be, whether I belong to the well-to-do class of the oppressors, or the

working class of the oppressed, in either case the disadvantages of non-compliance are less and its advantages greater than those of compliance. If I belong to the minority of oppressors, the disadvantages of non-compliance will consist in my being brought to judgment for refusing to perform my duties to the state, and if I am lucky, being acquitted, or as is done in the case of the Menonites in Russia, being set to work out my military service at some civil occupation for the state ; while, if I am unlucky, I may be condemned to exile or imprisonment for two or three years (I judge by the cases that have occurred in Russia), possibly to even longer imprisonment, or possibly to death, though the probability of that latter is very remote.

So much for the disadvantages of non-compliance. The disadvantages of compliance will be as follows : if I am lucky, I shall not be sent to murder my fellow-creatures, and shall not be exposed to great danger of being maimed and killed, but shall only be enrolled into military slavery. I shall be dressed up like a clown, I shall be at the beck and call of every man of a higher grade than my own from corporal to field-marshall, shall be put through any bodily contortions at their pleasure, and after being kept from one to five years, I shall have for ten years afterwards to be in readiness to undertake all of it again

at any minute. If I am unlucky, I may, in addition, be sent to war, where I shall be forced to kill men of foreign nations who have done me no harm, where I may be maimed or killed, or sent to certain destruction as in the case of the garrison of Sevastopol, and other cases in every war; or, what would be most terrible of all, I may be sent against my own compatriots and have to kill my own brothers for some dynastic or other state interests which have absolutely nothing to do with me. So much for the comparative disadvantages.

The comparative advantages of compliance and non-compliance are as follows :

For the man who submits the advantages will be that, after exposing himself to all the humiliation and performing all the barbarities required of him, he may, if he escapes being killed, get a decoration of red or gold tinsel to stick on his clown's dress; he may, if he is very lucky, be put in command of hundreds of thousands of others as brutalised as himself; be called a field-marshall and get a lot of money.

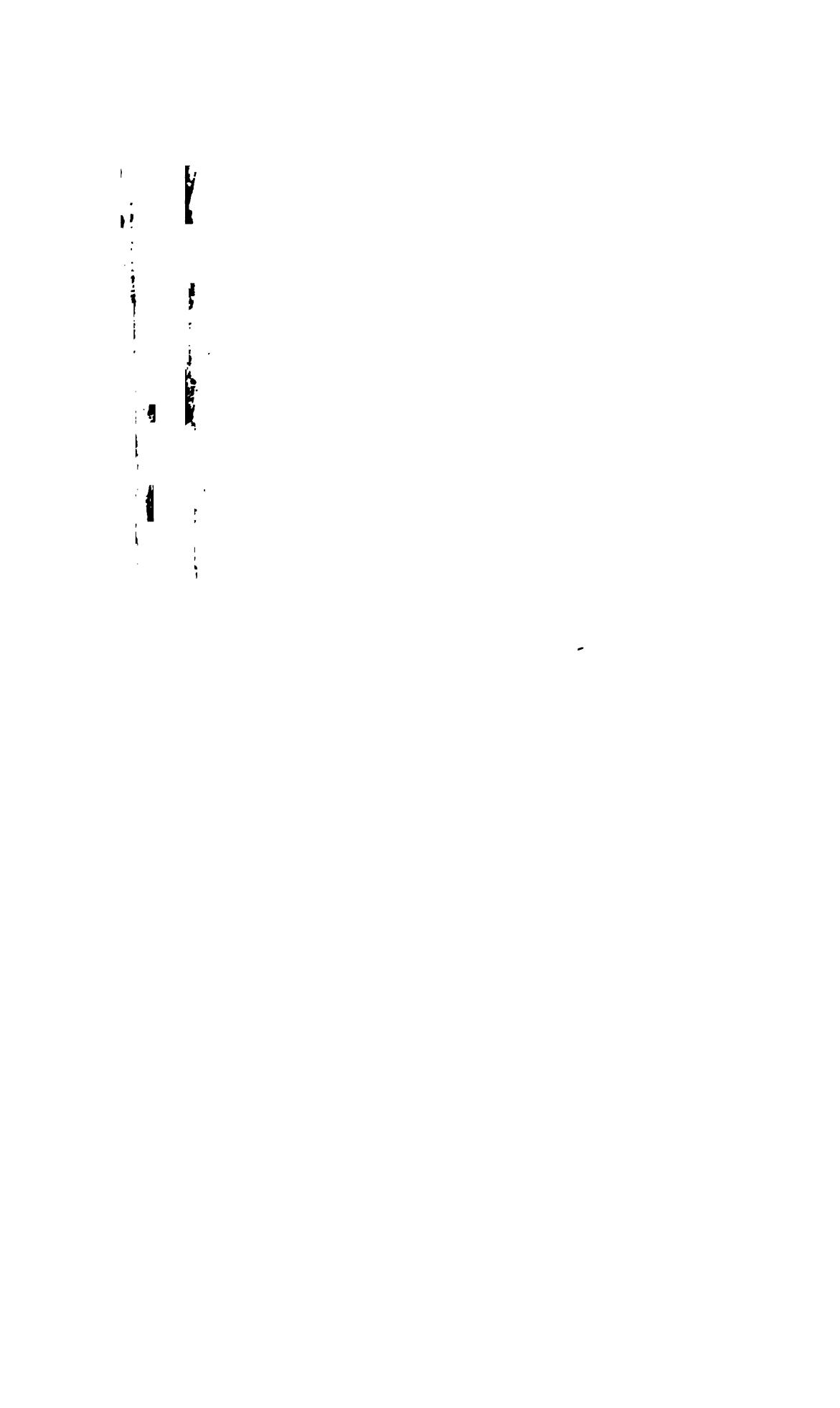
The advantages of the man who refuses to obey will consist in preserving his dignity as a man, gaining the approbation of good men, and above all knowing that he is doing the work of God, and so undoubtedly doing good to his fellow-men.

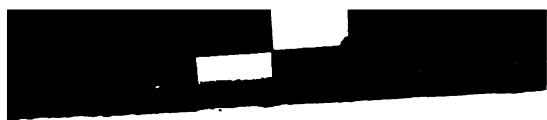
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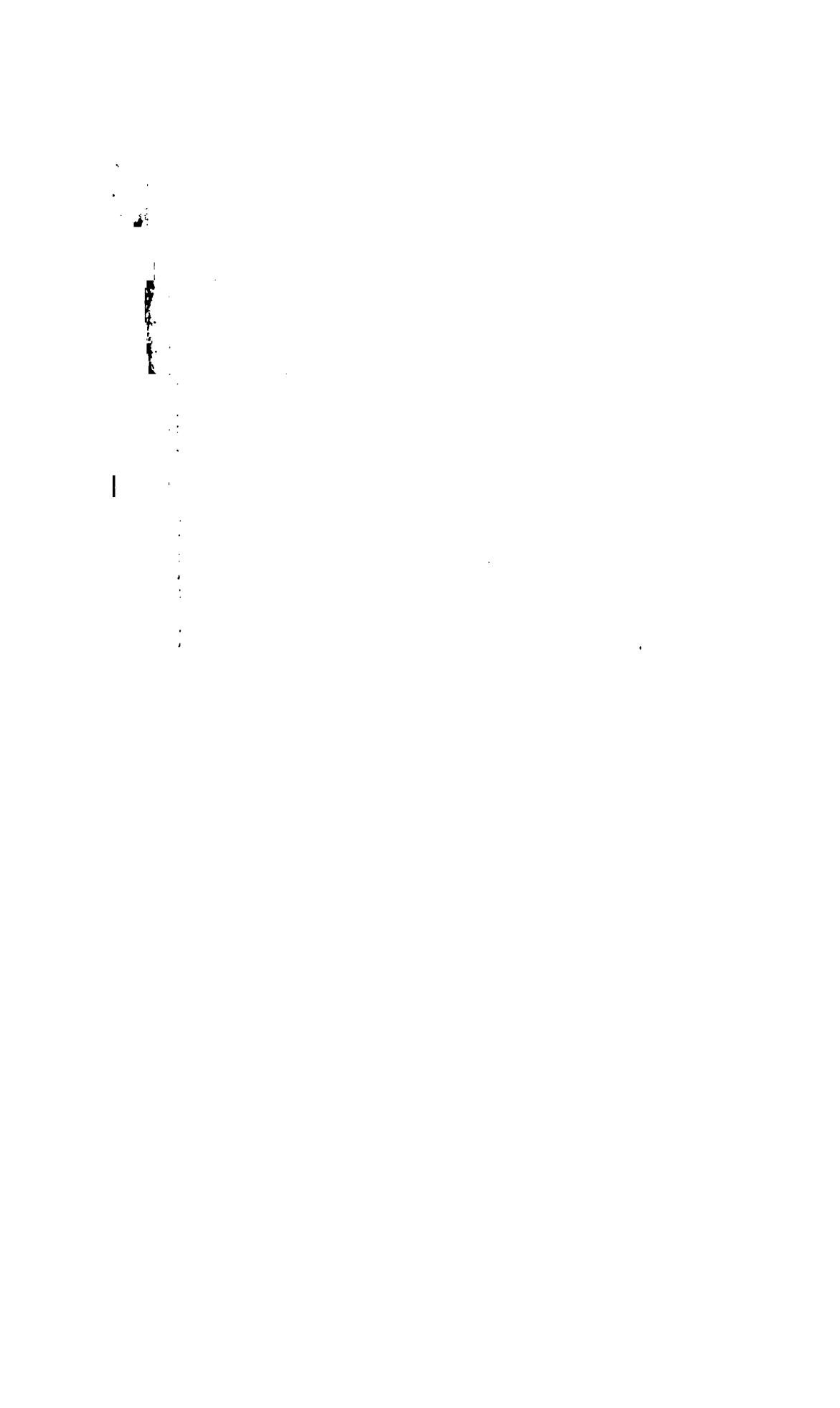
tages of both lines of conduct for a man of the wealthy classes, an oppressor. For a man of the poor working class the advantages and disadvantages will be the same, but with a great increase of disadvantages. The disadvantages for the poor man who submits will be aggravated by the fact that he will by taking part in it, and as it were assenting to it, strengthen the state of subjection in which he is held himself.

But no considerations as to how far the state is useful or beneficial to the men who help to support it by serving in the army, nor of the advantages or disadvantages for the individual of compliance or non-compliance with state-demands, will decide the question of the continued existence or the abolition of government. This question will be finally decided beyond appeal by the religious consciousness or conscience of every man who is forced, whether he will or no, through universal conscription, to face the question whether the state is to continue to exist or not.

END OF VOL. I.







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